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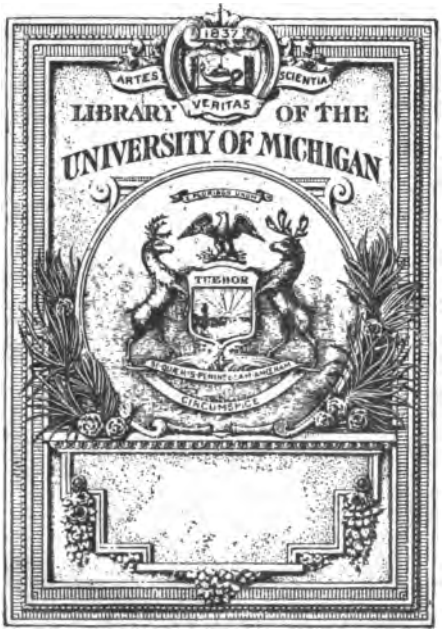
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THE

# MISCELLANEOUS PROSE WORKS

OF

# SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

VOL. XVIII.

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## PERIODICAL CRITICISM.

VOL. II.

ROMANCE.

EDINBURGH: PRINTED BY BALLANTYNE AND CO., PAUL'S WORK.

THE

# PROSE WORKS

OF

# SIR WALTER SCOTT

VOL. IS.

*Shirrefs Cottage, near Abbotsford.*

*Drawn by W. Nesfield from a sketch by F. C. Lewis Esq.*

EDINBURGH PUBLISHED 1835 BY ROBERT CADELL & WHITTAKER & Co LONDON

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BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART. 1771-1832.

VOL. II.

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ROMANCE.

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ROBERT CADELL, EDINBURGH;

WHITTAKER AND CO., LONDON.

1835.

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# CONTENTS

## OF VOLUME EIGHTEENTH.


| | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|
| ARTICLE | I.—AMADIS OF GAUL, | 1 |
| ——— | II.—SOUTHEY'S CHRONICLE OF THE CID, | 44 |
| ——— | III.——— LIFE OF JOHN BUNYAN, | 74 |
| ——— | IV.—GODWIN'S FLEETWOOD, | 118 |
| ——— | V.—CUMBERLAND'S JOHN DE LANCASTER, | 138 |
| ——— | VI.—MATURIN'S FATAL REVENGE, | 157 |
| ——— | VII.——— WOMEN; OR, POUR ET CONTRE, | 172 |
| ——— | VIII.—MISS AUSTEN'S NOVELS, | 209 |
| ——— | IX.—REMARKS ON FRANKENSTEIN, | 250 |
| ——— | X.—NOVELS OF ERNEST THEODORE HOFFMANN, | 270 |
| ——— | XI.—THE OMEN, | 333 |
| ——— | XII.—HAJJI BABA IN ENGLAND, | 354 |

# CRITICISM

ON

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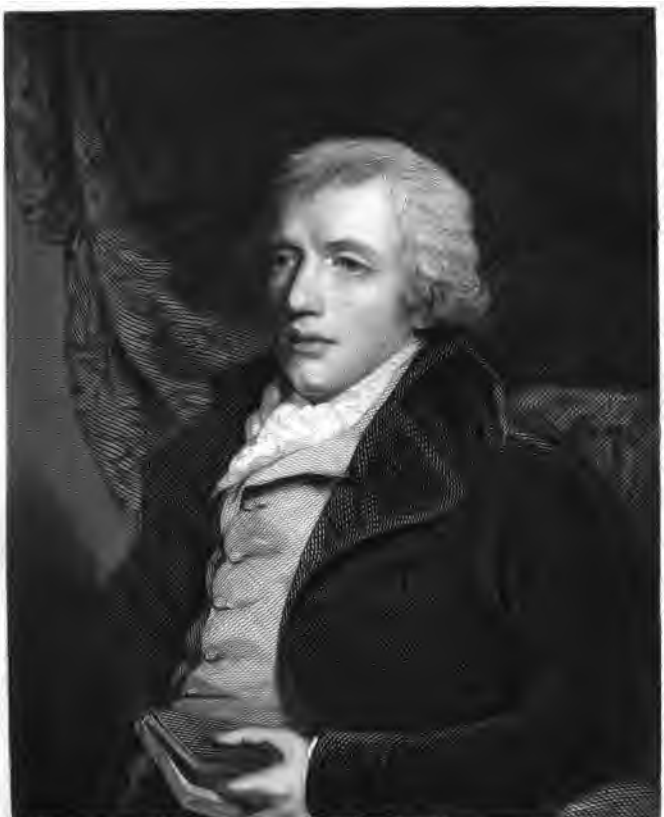

THE

# PROSE WORKS

OF

## SIR WALTER SCOTT

VOL. 18.

*Shrubs and Cottage near Abbotsford*

*Engraved by W. Miller from a Drawing by W. H. Bartlett*

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# CONTENTS

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| | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|
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| ——— | II.—SOUTHEY'S CHRONICLE OF THE CID, | 44 |
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| ——— | VI.—MATURIN'S FATAL REVENGE, | 157 |
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| ——— | IX.—REMARKS ON FRANKENSTEIN, | 250 |
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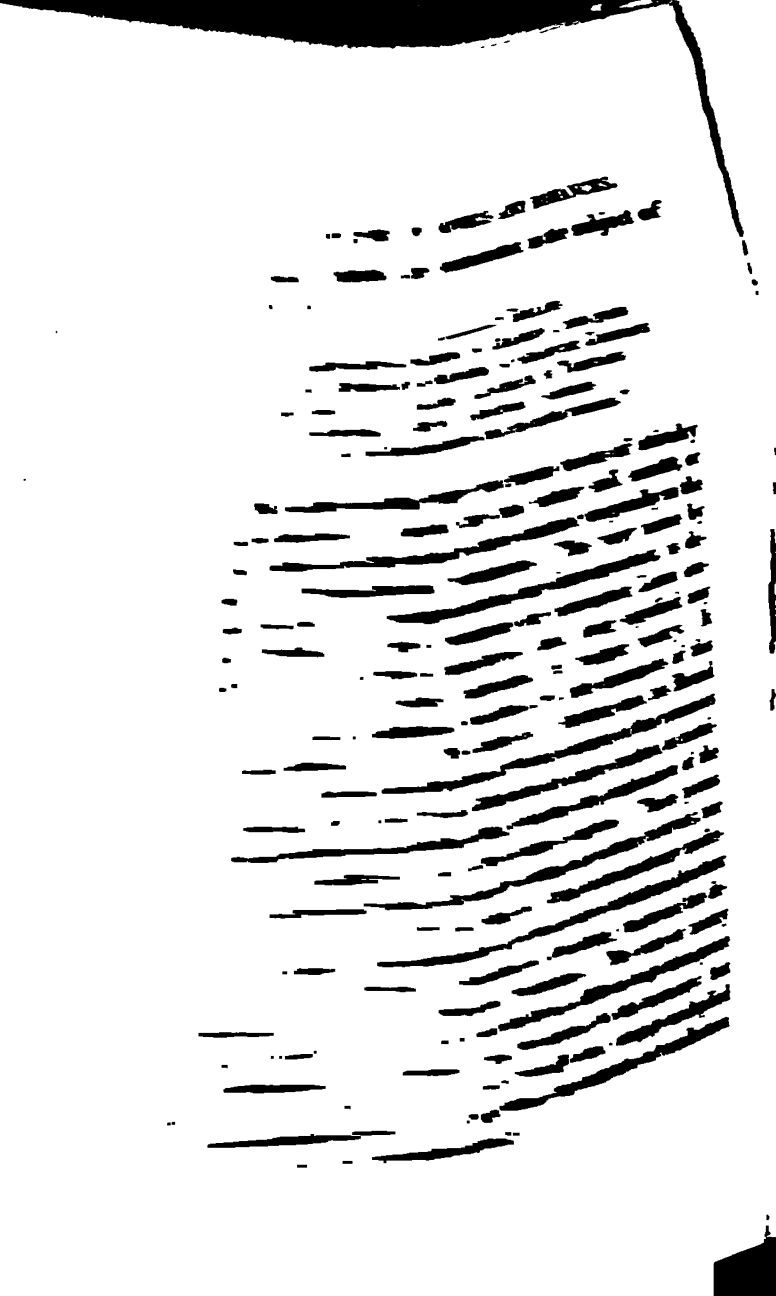
ed their labours, as one of the best known books of chivalry, and therefore the most prominent object for his ridicule. In this case, as in many others, the renown of the victor has carried down to posterity the memory of the vanquished; and, excepting the few students of black letter, we believe no reader is acquainted with *Amadis de Gaul*, otherwise than as the prototype of *Don Quixote de la Mancha*. But the ancient knight seems now in a fair way of being rescued from this degrading state of notoriety, and of once more resuming a claim to public notice upon his own proper merits; having, with singular good fortune, engaged in his cause two such authors as Mr Southey and Mr Rose. As the subject of the two articles before us, is in fact the same, we shall adopt the prose version of Mr Southey, as forming the fullest text for the general commentaries which we have to offer; reserving till the conclusion, the particular remarks which occur to us upon Mr Rose's poem.

The earliest copy of *Amadis de Gaul*, now known to exist, is the Spanish edition of Garcia Ordognez de Montalvo, which is used by Mr Southey in his translation. Montalvo professes, in general terms, to have revised and corrected this celebrated work from the ancient authorities. He is supposed principally to have used the version of Vasco de Lobeira, a Portuguese knight, who died in the beginning of the 15th century. But a dispute has arisen, whether even Lobeira can justly claim the merit of being the original author of this famous and interesting romance. Nicolas de Her-

beray, who translated Montalvo's work into French in 1575, asserts positively, that it was originally written in that language; and adds this remarkable passage: "*J'en ay trouvé encores quelques reste d'un vieil livre escrit à la main en langage Picard, sur lequel j'estime que les Espagnols ont fait leur traduction, non pas de tout suyvant le vrai original, comme l'on pourra veoir par cesluy, car ilz en ont obmis en aucuns endroits et augmenté aux autres.*" Mr Southey, however, setting totally aside the evidence of Herberay, as well as of Monsieur de Tressan, who also affirms the existence of a Picard original of *Amadis*, is decidedly of opinion, that Vasco de Lobeira was the original author. It is with some hesitation that we venture to differ from Mr Southey, knowing, as we well know, that his acquaintance with the Portuguese literature entitles him to considerable deference in such an argument: yet, viewing the matter on the proofs he has produced, and considering also the general history and progress of romantic composition, we incline strongly to think with Mr Rose, that the story of *Amadis* is originally of French extraction.

The earliest tales of romance which are known to us, are uniformly in verse; and this was very natural; for they were in a great measure the composition of the minstrels, who gained their livelihood by chanting and reciting them. This is peculiarly true of the French minstrels, as appears from the well-known quotation of Du Cange from the Romance of *Du Guesclin*, where the champions of



·arly as the fifteenth century, numerous prose
:s of the most celebrated romances were exe-
in France and England, which were printed
course of the sixteenth. These works are
·come extremely rare. Mr Southey attri-
·his to their great popularity. But if their
rity lasted, as he supposes, till they were
)ut by repeated perusal, the printers would
ound their advantage in supplying the public
·ew editions. The truth is, that the editions
·ublished of these expensive folio romances
very small. Abridgements and extracts
·l the purpose of the vulgar. Mean while,
.ste of the great took another turn; and the
of chivalry disappeared, in consequence of
eglect and indifference of their owners. More
a century elapsed betwixt their being read for
·ement, and sought for as curiosities; and such
pse of time would render any work scarce,
the editions as numerous as those of the Pil-
's Progress.

o return to our subject—It appears highly
able to us, that Lobeira's prose Amadis was
ded by a metrical romance, according to the
ral progress which we observe in the history
milar productions.

Another general remark authorizes the same con-
ion. It is well known that the romances of the
dle ages were not announced to the hearers as
ks of mere imagination. On the contrary, they
e always affirmed by the narrators to be matter
historical fact; nor was this disputed by the

simplicity of the audience. The gallant knights and lovely dames, for whose delight these romances were composed and sung, were neither shocked by the incongruities of the work, nor the marvellous turn of the adventures. Some old tradition was adopted for the subject of the tale; favourite and well-known names were introduced. An air of authenticity was thus obtained; the prejudices of the audience conciliated; and the feudal baron believed as firmly in the exploits of Roland and Oliver, as a sturdy Celt of our day in the equally sophisticated poems of Ossian.—Hence, the grand sources of romantic fiction have been traced to the Brut of Maister Wace, himself a translator of Geoffrey of Monmouth, who put into form the traditions of the bards of Wales and Armorica; to the fabulous history of Turpin, from which sprung the numerous romances of Charlemagne and his twelve Peers; and finally to the siege of Troy, as narrated by Dares Phrygius, and to the exploits of Alexander. Other and later heroes became also the subject of Romance. Such were William of Orange, called *Short-nose*, Richard of Normandy, Ralph Blundeville, Earl of Chester, Richard Cœur de Lion, Robert the Bruce, Bertrand du Guesclin, &c. &c. The barons also, before whom these tales were recited, were often flattered by a fabulous genealogy which deduced their pedigree from some hero of the story. A peer of England, the Earl of Oxford, if we recollect aright, conceited himself to be descended of the doughty Knight of the Swan; and, what is somewhat to our present purpose,

the French family of Bonneau deduce their pedigree from Dariolette, the complaisant confidant of Elisene, mother to Amadis.—*See Mr Rose's* work, p. 52.

A Portuguese minstrel would therefore have erred grossly in choosing for his subject a palpable and absolute fiction, in which he could derive no favour from the partialities and preconceived opinions of those whose applause he was ambitious to gain. But if we suppose Amadis to have been the exclusive composition of Lobeira, we must suppose him to have invented a story, not only altogether unconnected with the history of his own country, but identified with the real or fabulous history of France, which was then the ally of Castile, and the mortal foe of Portugal. The difficulty is at once removed, if we allow that author to have adopted from the French minstrels a tale of their country, founded probably upon some ancient and vague tradition, in the same manner as they themselves had borrowed from the British bards, and Geoffrey of Monmouth, their translator, the slender foundation upon which they erected the voluminous and splendid history of Arthur, and the doughty chivalry of his Round Table. This is the more probable, as we actually find Amadis enumerated among other heroes of French Romance mentioned in an ancient collection of stories, called *Cursor Mundi*, translated from the French into English metre.

> " Men lykyn jestis for to here,
> And Romans rede in diverse manere,

Of Alexandre the conquerour;
Of Julius Cæsar the emperour;
Of Greece and Troy the strong stryfe;
There many a man lost his lyf;
Of Brut, that baron bold of hond,
The first conquerour of Englond;
Of Kyng Artour, that was so ryche,
Was non in his tyme so ilyche;
Of wonders that among his knights fell,
And auntyrs deden as men her telle:
As Gaweyn and othir full abylle,
Which that kept the round tabyll;
Hou King Charles and Rowland fawghte
With Sarazins nold thei be cawght;
Of Tristram and Ysoude the swete,
Hou thei with love first gan mete;
Of King John and of Isenbras;
Of Ydoine and *Amadas.*"

WARTON'S *History of Poetry.*

If the hero last mentioned be really Amadis de Gaul, the question as to the existence of a French or Picard history of his exploits, is fairly put to rest. For, not to mention that the date of the poem above quoted is at least coeval with Vasco de Lobeira, it is admitted, that no French translation of the Portuguese work was made till that of Herberay in 1575; and, consequently, the author of the *Cursor Mundi* must have alluded to a French original, altogether independent of Lobeira's work.

Mr Southey himself, with the laudable impartiality of an editor more attached to truth than system, has produced the evidence of one Portuguese author, who says that *Pedro* de Lobeira translated the history of *Amadis de Gaul* from the French language, at the instance of the Infant Don

Pedro. *Agiologio Lusitano*, tom i. p. 480.—Now, although this author *has* made a mistake, in calling Lobeira, *Pedro*, instead of *Vasco*, yet his authority at least proves that there existed, even in Portugal, some tradition that *Amadis* had originally been composed in French, although the authors of that country have, with natural partiality, endeavoured to vindicate Lobeira's title to the fame of an original author.[1] One singular circumstance tends to corroborate what is stated in the *Agiologio*. It is certain that the work was executed under the inspection of an Infant of Portugal; for Montalvo expressly states, that at the instance of this high personage, an alteration, of a very peculiar nature, was made in the story. The passage, which is curious in more respects than one, is thus rendered by Mr Southey.

"At the end of the 41st chapter, it is said that Briolania would have given herself and her kingdom to Amadis; but he told her, right loyally, how he was another's. In the Spanish version, ff. 72, this passage follows—"But though the Infante Don Alfonso of Portugal, having pity upon this fair damsel, ordered it to be set down after another manner, that was what was his good pleasure, *and not what actually was written of their loves;* and they relate that history of these loves thus, though, with more reason, faith is to be given to what we before said:—Briolania, being restored to her kingdom, and enjoying the company of Amadis and Agrayes, persisted in her love; and, seeing no way whereby she could accomplish her mortal desires, she spake very secretly with the damsel, to whom Amadis, and Galaor, and Agrayes, had each promised a boon, if she would

[1] The evidence of Nicola Antonia, in the *Vetus Hispanæ Bibliotheca*, is, as remarked by Mr Rose, extremely inconclusive. He adds *ut fama est* to his affirmation that Lobeira was the original author of *Amadis*, and quotes the equally cautious expression of Antonius Augustinus—"Quarum fabularum primum fuisse auctorem Vascum Lobeiram *Lusitani jactant*."—Amadis de Gaule, a Poem. Introd. p. vi.

guide Don Galaor where he might find the Knight of the Forest. This damsel was now returned, and to her she disclosed her mind, and besought her, with many tears, to advise some remedy for that strong passion. The damsel then, in pity to her lady, demanded, as the performance of his promise, from Amadis, that he should not go out of a certain tower till he had a son or a daughter by Briolania; and they say, that, upon this, Amadis went into the tower, because he would not break his word; and there, because he would not consent to Briolania's desires, he remained, losing both his appetite and his sleep, till his life was in great danger. This being known in the court of King Lisuarte, his Lady Oriana, that she might not lose him, sent and commanded him to grant the damsel's desire; and he having this command, and considering that by no other means could he recover his liberty, or keep his word, took that fair Queen for his leman, and had by her a son and a daughter at one birth. But it was not so, unless Briolania, seeing how Amadis was drawing nigh to death in the tower, told the damsel to release him of his promise, if he would only remain till Don Galaor was arrived; doing thus, that she might so long enjoy the sight of the fair and famous knight, whom, when she did not behold, she thought herself in great darkness. This carries with it more reason why it should be believed; because this fair Queen was afterwards married to Don Galaor, as the fourth book relates."—*Introd.* p. vii.

It seems to us clear, from this singular passage, that the work upon which Lobeira was busied, under the auspices of the Infant Don Alfonso, or what Infant soever was his patron, must necessarily have been a translation, more or less free, from some ancient authority. If Amadis was the mere creature of Lobeira's fancy the author might no doubt be unwilling, in compliance with the whimsical compassion of his patron for the fair Briolania, to violate the image of ideal perfection pictured in his hero, to which fidelity was so necessary an attribute; but he could in no sense be said to interpolate *what actually was written*, unless he derived his story

from some authority, independent of the resources of his own imagination.

We do not think it necessary to enter into the question, how far the good taste and high spirit displayed in this romance, entitle us to ascribe it exclusively to the French. The modest assurance with which Monsieur de Tressan advances the claim of his nation upon this ground, is, as Mr Southey has justly observed, a truly French argument. We have not, however, that very high opinion of the Portuguese character, about the conclusion of the fourteenth century, which has been adopted by Mr Southey. We recollect that the "good and loyal Portuguese, who fought at Aljubarrota for King Joam of good memory," were indebted for that victory to Northberry and Hartfell, the English mercenaries, who arranged their host in so strong a position; to the headlong impetuosity of the Gascon, Berneze, and French adventurers, who composed the van of the Spanish army; and to the jealousy or cowardice of the Castilians, who refused to support their auxiliaries; so that little of the fame of that memorable day can in truth be imputed to the courage of the Portuguese. At that time, indeed, Castile and Portugal were rather the stages whereon foreigners exercised their courage in prize-fighting, than theatres for the display of national valour. Edward the Black Prince, John of Gaunt, John Chandos, and Sir Edward Knowles, fought in those countries, against Bertram of Clesquy and the flower of French chivalry; but we hear little of the prowess of the inhabitants them-

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selves. Such an insolent superiority was exercised by the English and Gascons, who came to the assistance of the King of Portugal, that, upon occasion of some discontent, they erected the pennon of St George as a signal of revolt; elected Sir John Soltier, a natural son of the Black Prince, to be their captain; and proclaimed themselves, *friends to God, and enemies to all the world;* nor had the king any other mode of saving his country from pillage, than by complying with their demands. Indeed, it is more than probable, that both Portugal and Spain would have fallen under the dominion of England, if the port wine, which now agrees so well with the constitution of our southern brethren, had been equally congenial to that of their martial ancestors: "but the Englyshmen founde the wynes there so strong, hot and brinning, that it corrupted their heads, and dried their bowelles, and brente their lightes and lyvers; and they had no remedy; for they could fynde but lytill good water to tempre their wynes, nor to refresh them; which was contrary to their natures; for Englyshmen, in their own countries, are sweetly nourished; and there they were brent both within and without" [*Froissart*]. To such circumstances was Portugal occasionally indebted to safety, at the hands of her too dangerous allies. It seems to us more than probable, that, during these wars, the French or Picard original of Amadis was acquired by Lobeira from some minstrel, attendant upon the numerous Breton and Gascon knights who followed the banners of the Earl of Cambridge, or the Duke of Lancaster;

for to Brittany or Acquitaine we conceive the original ought to be referred.

But while we cannot believe, against the concurring testimony of Herberay and Tressan, as well as against the usual progress of romantic composition, that Amadis de Gaul is, from beginning to end, the invention of Lobeira; yet, we conceive enough may safely be ascribed to him, to warrant the praises bestowed on him by Mr Southey, and perhaps to entitle him to the name of an original author. We do not indeed know the precise nature of Lobeira's work, nor what additions have been made to it by Montalvo; but it is easy to conceive that it must have been something very different from the Picard original. In making some remarks on the style and structure of Amadis, we shall endeavour to contrast them with those of the earlier romance.

The metrical romances differed in many most material particulars from the prose romances by which they were superseded. The former partook of the character of the rhapsodists, by whom they were usually composed, and always sung. It was vain to expect from the ignorant minstrels, or those who wrote for them, a well-connected history; nor, if they had been capable of such a refined composition, could its beauties have been relished by their audience, to whom they had seldom time to sing above one or two of the adventures contained in a long romance. Their narration was therefore rambling and desultory. One adventure followed another, without much visible connexion; the only

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Maidens dressen them with pride.
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Merry it is in the month of June,
When fennel hangeth abroad in town;
Violet and roses flower
Groweth then on maidens bower;
The sun is hot, the day is long;
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Of such passages, which serve to relieve the heaviness of the perpetually recurring fight and tournament, the prose romance affords us no example. The ornaments which it presents are those of studied description, every word of which is laboured, as applicable to the precise scene which is described, without expressing or exciting any general sensibility of the beauties of nature. We may take, as no unfavourable instance, the account of the tower and gardens constructed by Apollidon in the Firm Island.

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"Alexander made a cry hardi,
'Ore tost, aby, aby.'
Then the knights of Achaye
Justed with them of Arabye;
Egypt justed with them of Tyre,
Simple knights with rich syre.
There ne was forgift, ne forbearing,
Between Vavasour or King.
Before men mighten and behind,
Contest seek, and contest find.
With Persians fought the Gregois;
There was cry, and great *hontois;*
There might men find his peer;
There lose many his destrier; * * *War-horse.*
There was quicke in little thrawe;
Many gentil knight y-slawe;
Many arm, many heavod,
Sone from the body reaved;
Many gentle ladye
There lost quickly her *ami;*
There was many y-maimed:
Many fair pensill bebledde:
There were swords liklaking; * * *Clashing.*
There were speres in blood bathing:
Both Kings there, sans doute,
Y-dashed in with all their route;
Many lands, both near and far,
Lost their Lords in this war.
Earth quaked of their riding;
The weather thicken'd of their crying;
The blood of them that were y-slawe,
Ran by floods to the lawe."

In this description, as in the former, may be traced the spirit of the poet, warming as he advanced in narration; from the encountering of the hosts, when war, like death, levelled all distinction betwixt the vassal and monarch, to the fall of the loves of ladies and the lords of domain, to the bloody banners, clashing swords and gory lances, until the ground shook under the charge of the combatants, the air was darkened at their shouts, and the blood of the dying poured like torrents into the valley. The following is the description of the grand battle betwixt Lisuarte and Aravigo, in which the timely assistance of Amadis, with his father, gave the victory to the father of Oriana:—

"Presently (King Lisuarte) went down the side of the mountain into the plain; and as it was now upon that hour when the sun was rising, it shone upon their arms; and they appeared so well disposed, that their enemies, who had before held them as nothing, now thought of them otherwise. In this array, which you have heard, they moved slowly over the field one against the other.

"At this season, King Perion, with his sons Amadis and Florestan, entered the plain upon their goodly steeds, and with their arms of the Serpents, which shone brightly in the sun; and they rode on to place themselves between the two armies, brandishing their spears, whose points were so polished and clear that they glittered like stars; and the father went between his sons. Much were they admired by both parts, and each would willingly have had them on his side; but no one knew whom they came to aid, nor who they were. They, seeing that the hoste of Brian of Monjuste was about to join battle, put spurs to their horses, and rode up near to his banner; then set themselves against King Targadan, who came against him. Glad was Don Brian of their help, though he knew them not; but they, when they saw that it was time, rode to attack the host of King Targadan so fiercely that all were astonished. In that encounter, King Perion struck that other King so hardily, that a part of the spear soon entered

guide Don Galaor where he might find the Knight of the Forest. This damsel was now returned, and to her she disclosed her mind, and besought her, with many tears, to advise some remedy for that strong passion. The damsel then, in pity to her lady, demanded, as the performance of his promise, from Amadis, that he should not go out of a certain tower till he had a son or a daughter by Briolania; and they say, that, upon this, Amadis went into the tower, because he would not break his word; and there, because he would not consent to Briolania's desires, he remained, losing both his appetite and his sleep, till his life was in great danger. This being known in the court of King Lisuarte, his Lady Oriana, that she might not lose him, sent and commanded him to grant the damsel's desire; and he having this command, and considering that by no other means could he recover his liberty, or keep his word, took that fair Queen for his leman, and had by her a son and a daughter at one birth. But it was not so, unless Briolania, seeing how Amadis was drawing nigh to death in the tower, told the damsel to release him of his promise, if he would only remain till Don Galaor was arrived; doing thus, that she might so long enjoy the sight of the fair and famous knight, whom, when she did not behold, she thought herself in great darkness. This carries with it more reason why it should be believed; because this fair Queen was afterwards married to Don Galaor, as the fourth book relates."—*Introd.* p. vii.

It seems to us clear, from this singular passage, that the work upon which Lobeira was busied, under the auspices of the Infant Don Alfonso, or what Infant soever was his patron, must necessarily have been a translation, more or less free, from some ancient authority. If Amadis was the mere creature of Lobeira's fancy the author might no doubt be unwilling, in compliance with the whimsical compassion of his patron for the fair Briolania, to violate the image of ideal perfection pictured in his hero, to which fidelity was so necessary an attribute; but he could in no sense be said to interpolate *what actually was written*, unless he derived his story

description, which we have already remarked as an attribute of the prose romance.

The most curious part, however, of this curious subject, respects the change in manners which appears to have taken place about the middle of the 14th century, when what we now call the *Spirit of Chivalry* seems to have shone forth with the most brilliant lustre. In the older romances, we look in vain for the delicacy which, according to Burke, robbed vice of half its evil, by depriving it of all its grossness. The tales of the older metrical romancers, founded frequently on fact, and always narrated in a coarse and downright style, excite feelings sometimes ludicrous, and often disgusting; and in fact can only be excelled by the unparalleled *fabliaux* published by Barbazan, which although professedly written to be recited to noble knights and dames, exhibit a nakedness, not only in the description, but in the turn of the story, which would now banish them even from a bagnio, unless of the very lowest order. The ladies in metrical romances, not only make the first advances on all occasions, but with a degree of vivacity, copied it would seem from the worthy spouse of Potiphar. For example, a certain knight called Sir Amis, having declined the proffered favours of the Lady Belisaunt, pleading his allegiance to his liege lord, receives from her the following sentimental rebuke:

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selves. Such an insolent superiority was exercised by the English and Gascons, who came to the assistance of the King of Portugal, that, upon occasion of some discontent, they erected the pennon of St George as a signal of revolt; elected Sir John Soltier, a natural son of the Black Prince, to be their captain; and proclaimed themselves, *friends to God, and enemies to all the world;* nor had the king any other mode of saving his country from pillage, than by complying with their demands. Indeed, it is more than probable, that both Portugal and Spain would have fallen under the dominion of England, if the port wine, which now agrees so well with the constitution of our southern brethren, had been equally congenial to that of their martial ancestors: "but the Englyshmen founde the wynes there so strong, hot and brinning, that it corrupted their heads, and dried their bowelles, and brente their lightes and lyvers; and they had no remedy; for they could fynde but lytill good water to tempre their wynes, nor to refresh them; which was contrary to their natures; for Englyshmen, in their own countries, are sweetly nourished; and there they were brent both within and without" [*Froissart*]. To such circumstances was Portugal occasionally indebted to safety, at the hands of her too dangerous allies. It seems to us more than probable, that, during these wars, the French or Picard original of Amadis was acquired by Lobeira from some minstrel, attendant upon the numerous Breton and Gascon knights who followed the banners of the Earl of Cambridge, or the Duke of Lancaster;

for to Brittany or Acquitaine we conceive the original ought to be referred.

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his breast, and he fell. Amadis smote Abdasian the Fierce, so that armour nothing profited him, but the lance passed through from side to side, and he fell like a dead man. Don Florestan drove Carduel, saddle and man, under the horse's feet; these three being the bravest of that battalion that had come forwards to combat the Knights of the Serpents. Then laid they hand to sword, and passed through the first squadron, felling all before them, and charged the second; and when they were thus between both, there was to be seen what marvellous feats of prowess they wrought with their swords; such, that none did like them on either side; and they had now under their horses more than ten knights whom they had smitten down. But when their enemies saw that they were no more than three, they charged them on all sides, laying on such heavy blows that the aid of Don Brian was full needful, who came up with his Spaniards, a brave people and well horsed, and rode among the enemy, slaying and felling them, though his own men fell also; so that the Knights of the Serpents were succoured, and the enemy so handled, that they perforce gave back upon the third battalion. Then there was a great press, and a great danger for all, and many knights died upon either side; but what King Perion and his sons did there cannot be expressed. Such was the uproar and confusion, that King Aravigo feared lest his own men, who had given ground, should make the others fly; and he called aloud to Arcalaus, to advance with all the battalions, and attack in one body. This presently he did, and King Aravigo with him; but without delay King Lisuarte did the same; so that the whole battle was now joined: and such was the clang of strokes, and the cry and noise of horsemen, that the earth trembled, and the valleys rung again."—Vol. iii. p. 90.

In this last quotation, as in the former, the inferiority of Lobeira is sufficiently manifest; though his description is by no means void of spirit. It cannot be alleged that this is owing to the poetry; for no modern will attribute much to the force of the minstrel's numbers; and the author of Amadis is far from disclaiming the use of poetical ornament. The difference arises from the disposition to specification, and to exchange general effect for minute

description, which we have already remarked as an attribute of the prose romance.

The most curious part, however, of this curious subject, respects the change in manners which appears to have taken place about the middle of the 14th century, when what we now call the *Spirit of Chivalry* seems to have shone forth with the most brilliant lustre. In the older romances, we look in vain for the delicacy which, according to Burke, robbed vice of half its evil, by depriving it of all its grossness. The tales of the older metrical romancers, founded frequently on fact, and always narrated in a coarse and downright style, excite feelings sometimes ludicrous, and often disgusting; and in fact can only be excelled by the unparalleled *fabliaux* published by Barbazan, which although professedly written to be recited to noble knights and dames, exhibit a nakedness, not only in the description, but in the turn of the story, which would now banish them even from a bagnio, unless of the very lowest order. The ladies in metrical romances, not only make the first advances on all occasions, but with a degree of vivacity, copied it would seem from the worthy spouse of Potiphar. For example, a certain knight called Sir Amis, having declined the proffered favours of the Lady Belisaunt, pleading his allegiance to his liege lord, receives from her the following sentimental rebuke:

> "That merry maiden of great renown
> Answered, 'Sir Knight, thou has no *crown*—

[1] Art not shaved like a monk.

For God that bought thee dear,
Whether art thou priest or parson,
Other art thou monk, other canon,
That preachest me thus here?
" ' Thou never shouldst have been a knight,
To go amongst maidens bright;
Thou shouldst have been a frere:
He that learned thee thus to preach,
The devil of hell I him biteche,
My brother though he were. ' "

*Amis & Amelion.*

As the damsels were urgent in their demands, the knights of these more early ages were often brutally obstinate in their refusal; and instead of the gentle denial which the love-sick Briolania received from the courteous Amadis, they were too apt to exclaim like Bevis of Hamton, when invited to a rendezvous by the fair Josiana, a Saracen princess—

" Forth the knights go can;
To Bevis' chamber they came anon,
And prayed as he was gentleman,
Come speak with Josian.
Bevis stoutly in this stound
Haf up his head from the ground
. . . . . .
And said, ' If ye ne were messagers,
I should ye slay, ye lossengers;
I ne will rise one foot fro' grounde
For to speak with an heathen hounde;
She is a hound, also be ye,
Out of my chamber swith ye flee. ' "

All this coarseness, in word and deed, was effectually banished from the romances of chivalry which were composed subsequent to 1350. Sentiment had begun to enter into these fictions, not

casually, or from the peculiar delicacy of an individual author, but as a necessary qualification of the heroes and heroines whose loves occupied their ponderous folios.

Of this refinement we find many instances in Amadis. Balays of Corsante being repulsed by a damsel, explains his sentiments upon such points.

"My good lady," Balays answered, "think no more of what I said: it becomes knights to serve damsels, and to woo their love, and becomes them to deny, as you have done; and albeit, at the first, we think it much to obtain of them what we desire, yet when wisely and discreetly they resist our inordinate appetites, keeping that without which they are worthy of no praise, they be even of ourselves more reverenced and commended."

Notwithstanding this favourable alteration in their tone, the reader is not to understand that the morality of these writings was in fact very materially amended; for at no period was the age of chivalry distinguished for female virtue. Those who have supposed the contrary, have never opened a romance written before the tomes of Calprenede, and Scudery, and judge of Queen Guenever, Iscult, and Oriana, by what they find there recorded of Mandane and Cassandra. But the genuine prose romances of chivalry, although less gross in language and circumstance, contain as little matter for edification as the tales of the minstrels, to which they succeeded. Lancelot du Lac is the adulterous lover of Guenever, the wife of his friend and sovereign; and Tristram de Lionel the incestuous seducer of his uncle's spouse, as well in the prose folios of Rusticien de Puise,

and the Knight of the Castle of Gast, as in the rhimes of Chretien de Troyes and Thomas of Erceldoune. Nor did the tales of a more modern date turn upon circumstances more correct: witness the history of the Petit Iehan de Saintré, and many others. Of Amadis, in particular, Mr Southey has observed, that "all the first-born children are illegitimate," because "the hero must be every way irresistible." The same observation applies to most romances of chivalry; so that one would be tempted to suppose that the damsels of those days, doomed frequently to wander through lonely woods infested by robbers, giants, and caitiffs of every description, were so far from trusting, like the lady in Comus, to the magic power of true virginity, that they hastened to confer upon some faithful knight a treasure so very precarious, while it was yet their own to bestow. But the modern man of gallantry will be surprised to hear, that this by no means diminished either the zeal or duty of the lover, who had thus attained the summit of his hopes. On the contrary, unless in the case of here and there a Don Galaor, who is always painted as a subaltern character, a *preux chevalier* was bound, not only to maintain the honour of the lady thus deposited in his custody, but to observe towards her the fidelity and respect of religious observance.[1] Every one knows how long Sir Lancelot had enjoyed the favours of Queen Guen-

[1] The Cicesbei of Italy derive their order from the days of chivalry. The reader is referred to the *Mémoires de Grammont* for an account of the duties expected from them.

ever; and yet that scrupulous knight went distracted, and remained so till he was healed by the Sang-real, merely because by enchantment he was brought to the bed of the lovely Dame Elaine. As for Amadis, the bare suspicion which Oriana conceived of his infidelity, occasioned his doing penance on the Poor Rock in a manner unequalled, unless by the desolate knight who averred himself to have retired to a cavern, where he "used for his bed mosse, for his candle mosse, for his covering mosse, and, unless now and then a few coals, mosse for his meat; a dry food, God wot, and a fresh; but so moistened with wet tears, and so salte, that it was hard to conjecture whether it was better to feed or fast."[1]

In short, the love of the knights-errant was like their laws of honour, altogether beyond the common strain of feeling, as well as incapable of being measured by the standard of religion and morality. Their rules of honour have in some degree survived the fate of their order; and we have yet fatal instances of bloodshed for "a word of reproach," a "bratchet hound," or such other causes of duel as figure in the tales of the Table Round. But the love which was not only fostered, but imposed as a solemn duty by the laws of chivalry, is now only to be traced in such a romance as is before us. It subsisted, as we have seen, independent of maidenly chastity and conjugal fidelity; and its source perhaps may be traced to a remote

[1] Progresses of Queen Elizabeth, vol. ii. p. 136.

period of antiquity. Tacitus has noticed the respect in which women were held among the German tribes. The ladies of Britain were indulged with the privilege of a plurality of husbands; and those of Scandinavia, although they were limited to one, might divorce him at their pleasure.[1] This sort of supremacy, the ladies appear at all times to have exercised over the descendants of the Northern tribes. It is true, as already mentioned, the homage paid their charms by the earlier heroes of chivalry, was interrupted and sullied by the roughness of their manners and expressions. To reverse the complaint of the Knight of the Burning Pestle, "one whom Amadis had styled courteous damsel, Bevis would have called heathen hound;" but the duty of obeying the hests, and fighting for the honour of a lady, was indispensable even among the earliest and rudest sons of chivalry. In the course of the fourteenth century, this was sublimated and refined to the most extravagant degree; so that the secret, inviolable, and romantic attachment of Amadis to Oriana might be easily paralleled by similar passages from real history. Even the zeal of devotion gave way to this all devouring

[1] A curious instance may be found in *Eyrbiggia-Saga*. Thordisa, the wife of Borko, an Icelandic chief, attempted to stab one Eyulf Grae, the friend and guest of her husband. Borko interfering, administered to his wife some domestic chastisement. But mark the consequence. "When Borko departed from Helgafels, Thordisa, standing before the door of the house, called witnesses to bear testimony that she divorced her husband Borko; assigning for a cause, that he had struck her, and that she would no longer submit to such injuries. Thereupon the household goods were divided betwixt them."—[See *ante*, vol. v. pp. 363-5.]

sentiment; and very religious indeed must the knight have been, who had, as was predicted of Esplandian, God upon his *right* hand, and his lady upon his *left*.

We cannot leave this part of our subject, without bestowing our warm commendations on Mr Southey, for disdaining to follow Tressan and Herberay, in the impure descriptions and obscenities which they have much oftener introduced, than found, in the Spanish original. Tressan in particular, whose talents and taste made it totally inexcusable, dwells with infinitely higher gust upon the gallantries of Don Galaor, than upon the love of Amadis; and describes them with that vicious and perverted love of obscenity, which Mr Southey so justly reprobates, as "peculiarly and characteristically the disgrace of French Literature." May a practice, so ominous to the morals and manly virtue of our nation, long be a stranger to the writings of those who profess to afford to Britons information or pleasure!

The manners described in *Amadis de Gaul* are, in other respects, strictly feudal and chivalrous. The points of right and honour which are discussed; the rules of combat and of truce; the high and rigid adherence to knightly faith, are all features of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. What may appear to the modern reader, one of the most strained instances of the latter, is the conduct of King Lisnarte in the fourth book, to whom an old man presents a crown and mantle, under the condition, that he shall restore them at his *cour plenière*, or grant the suppliant a boon in their stead. On the

appointed day, the crown and mantle having been conveyed out of Lisuarte's custody by enchantment, the boon demanded by the stranger in lieu is, that Oriana, the daughter of Lisuarte, should be delivered up to him.

"Lisuarte exclaimed, 'Ah, knight, thou hast asked a great thing;' and all who were present were greatly grieved. But the King, who was the most loyal man in the world, bade them not trouble themselves. 'It is better,' said he, 'to lose my daughter than to break my word; the one evil afflicts few, the other would injure all; for how would the people keep faith with one another if they could not depend upon the King's truth?' And he commanded his daughter to be brought. When the queen and her ladies heard that, they made the most sorrowful outcry that ever was heard; but the king ordered them to their chambers, and he forbade all his people to lament on pain of losing his favour. 'My daughter,' cried he, 'must fare as God hath appointed, but my word shall never be wilfully broken.'"

Instances of a similar rigid adherence to knightly faith can be produced from real history. The Duke of Gueldres being on a journey through Prussia, was laid in wait for, and made prisoner, by certain banditti, or adventurers, commanded by a squire, named Arnold. When the Grand-Master of the Teutonic Order heard what had happened, he marched against the castle where the duke was confined, with so strong a force, that Arnold durst not abide his coming. Hereupon he said to his prisoner, "Sir duke, ye are my prisoner, and I am your master. Ye are a gentleman and true knight; ye have sworn, and given me your faith. I think not to abide the master of Pruce; he cometh hither with a great force. Tarry here if you list, I will carry with me your faith and promise." To this

he added the name of the place to which he retreated, and so left the duke at liberty. The duke waited the arrival of the grand-master; but was so far from considering it as absolving him from his captivity, that no entreaties nor representations could stay him from acquitting his faith, by again putting himself into the hands of Arnold; with whom he remained a prisoner, till he was ransomed by his friends.

The quarrel betwixt King Lisuarte and Amadis, because he would not bestow upon Galvanes the hand of his captive Madasima, and the dominion of the island which she inherited, and which he had conquered; the manner in which Amadis and his kindred renounce the service of Lisuarte; the mutual defiances which are formally exchanged betwixt them; are all in the high tone of feudal solemnity, and are well worthy the attention of those who investigate the customs of the middle ages. The reader may compare the mode in which these defiances were received, with the deportment of the Black Prince, when he was served with a writ of summons to attend the Parliament at Paris:

"When the prince had read this letter, he had great marvel, and shook his head, and beheld fiercely the Frenchmen; and when he had a little studied he answered in this manner: 'Sirs, we will gladly go to Paris to our uncle sith he hath sent thus for us; but I assure you, that it shall be with bassnet on our head, and sixty thousand men in our company.'"—FROISSART.

We have dwelt the more fully upon the manners of this romance, because they correspond exactly with those of the period in which it was written. In the romances which were composed during the

declension of chivalry, the writers no longer painted from the life. The manners which they described were as fictitious as the adventures which they narrated; and the reader may look for such historical resemblances as we have noticed with as little success, as if he were to consult a map for the situation of Taprobana, or the Firm Island.

We have already observed, that the story of Amadis is constructed with singular ingenuity. The unvaried recurrence of the combat with the lance and the sword is indeed apt to try the patience of the modern reader; although the translator's compassion has spared them some details, and "consolidated," as he rather quaintly says, "many of those single blows which have no reference to armorial anatomy." But, in defiance of the similarity of combat and adventure, the march of the story engages our attention; and the successive events are well managed to support each other, and to bring on the final catastrophe. It is not our intention to give a detailed account of the story, but the following sketch may excite rather than forestall the curiosity of the reader.

Perion, King of Gaul, the guest of Garinter, King of Brittany, becomes enamoured of the fair Elisene, daughter of that monarch, obtains a private interview, and departs to his own kingdom. The princess becomes pregnant, and, to hide her disgrace, the child, afterwards the famous Amadis, is placed in a cradle, and launched into the sea. He is found by a knight of Scotland, and carried to that kingdom, where he is educated as the son of

his preserver. Mean while, Perion marries Elisene, and they have a second son, called Galaor, who is carried off by a giant, and brought up to feats of arms and chivalry. Amadis, in the interim, is brought by his foster-father to the court of Scotland, where he meets Oriana, daughter of Lisuarte, King of Britain. To her he becomes warmly attached, and, when knighted, prevails on her to receive him as her cavalier. Thus animated, he sets forth on his military career, to assist Perion of Gaul, who is only known to him as the ally of the Scottish monarch, against Abyes, King of Ireland, who had besieged Perion in his capital. But no knight-errant ever attains the direct place of his destination, when he happens to have one, without some *by-battles*. Several of these fall to Amadis's lot; and he is involved in many dangers, through which he is protected by the friendship of Urganda the Unknown, a mighty enchantress, the professed patroness of his house. Arriving at length at the capital of Gaul, he terminates the war, by the defeat and death of Abyes, whom he slays in single combat. After this exploit, by means of tokens which had been placed in his cradle, he is recognised and acknowledged as the son of Perion and Elisene. By this time Gandalac, the tutor of Galaor, conceived him to be ready to execute the purpose for which he had carried him off; namely, to maintain a battle on his account, against a brother giant who had injured him. Galaor having previously received the order of knighthood from his brother Amadis, though without knowing him, undertakes the com-

cannot see why Mr Rose should have thought himself obliged to follow in any respect the prose of Herberay, while he himself was writing poetry. We can easily conceive that a prose romance may be converted into a metrical romance or epic poem; but we cannot allow, that there ought to subsist betwixt two works, the style of which is so very different, the relations of a translation and an original work. In consequence of Mr Rose's plan, it appears to us that his poem has suffered some injury. The necessity of following out minutely the prose narrative, occasions an occasional languor in the poem, for which simple, and even elegant versification, does not atone. We will, however, frankly own, that the casual circumstance of having perused Mr Southey's prose work before the poem of Mr Rose may have had some influence upon our criticism; since our curiosity being completely forestalled, we may have felt a diminished interest in the latter from a cause not imputable to want of merit.

The avowed model upon which Mr Rose has framed his Amadis is the translation of Le Grand's *Fabliaux* by Mr Way; and it is but justice to state that, in our opinion, he has fully attained what he proposed. An easy flow of verse, partaking more of the school of Dryden than of Pope, and checkered, occasionally, with ancient words and terms of chivalry, seems well calculated for the narration of romance and legendary tale. The following passage is a successful imitation of Chaucer:—

" To tell, as meet, the costly feast's array,
My tedious tale would hold a summer's day:
I let to sing who mid the courtly throng
Did most excel in dance or sprightly song;
Who first, who last, were seated on the dais;
Who carped of love and arms in courtliest phrase,
What many minstrels harp, what bratchets lie
The feet beneath, what hawks were placed on high."

We do not pretend to say, that Mr Rose's poetry is altogether free from the common-places of the time. Such lines occur as these:—

" Nearer and nearer bursts the deafening crash,
Athwart the lurid clouds red lightnings flash."

But if Mr Rose's plan prevented him from aspiring to the higher flights of poetry, he never, on the other hand, disgusts the reader by sinking into bathos. We are persuaded that the public would be interested in a modern version of some of our best metrical romances by Mr Rose. We are the more certain of this, because we have read the notes to *Amadis* with very great satisfaction. We pay them a very great compliment, indeed, when we say, that they resemble in lightness and elegance, though not in extent of information, those of George Ellis to Way's *Fabliaux*.

# ARTICLE II.

## SOUTHEY'S CHRONICLE OF THE CID.

[*From the Quarterly Review, Feoruary*, 1809.]

THE name of the Cid is best known to us by the celebrated tragedy of Corneille, founded on a circumstance which happened early in the champion's career, and which the Spanish compilers of his story do not dwell upon with any peculiar emphasis. Those who are deep read in Don Quixote may also recollect, that the Campeador and his great exploits against the Moors was one of the subjects that deranged the brain of the worthy knight of La Mancha. Few English or French literati know more of a hero as famous in Spain as Bertrand du Guesclin in France, Glendower in Wales, or Wallace in Scotland; yet have his achievements been recorded in the "letter blake," and harped in many a hall and bower.

"Desde Sevilla a Marchena,
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Mr Southey, to whom the fabulous heroes of Spain, her Amadis, and her Palmerin, have such

obligations, has undertaken the same generous task in favour of the Cid, the real champion of a history scarcely less romantic than theirs. His work is not to be considered as the precise translation of any of the numerous histories of the Cid, but as a compilation of all that relates to him extracted from those several sources. First, a prose chronicle of the life and achievements of the Cid, printed in 1552 and 1593, which there is some reason to ascribe to Gil Diaz, a converted Moor, one of the Cid's most faithful followers. This is corrected and enlarged from a general chronicle of Spanish history. Secondly, a metrical legend, of which the Cid is the hero. This work, which fluctuates between history and romance, has a considerable degree of poetical merit, is the oldest poem in the Spanish language, and, in Mr Southey's judgment, decidedly and beyond all comparison the finest. Lastly, the translator has laid under contribution the popular ballads or romances which celebrated the feats of this renowned warrior—and were sung by minstrels, jongleurs, and glee-men, at places of festive resort. Mr Southey is not inclined to rank very highly either the authority or the antiquity of these songs, and has made little use of them in compiling his Chronicle. By these lights, however, he has guided the narrative through the following details.

Rodrigo of Bivar, "a youth strong in arms and of good customs," destined to protect his country from the Moors, was born at Burgos in the reign of King Ferrando of Castile, and in the year 1026.

no motive for sparing, and the Emperor is slain on the field. In the mean while, the sainted hermit Nasciano, who had educated Esplandian, and to whom Oriana had in confession revealed the history of her love to Amadis, arrives in the camp of Lisuarte, and by his mediation brings about a truce, both parties agreeing to retreat a day's journey from each other. But Lisuarte, whose army was most weakened, was, by this retrograde movement, exposed to much danger. Arcalaus the enchanter had had influence enough with King Aravigo, to prevail upon him to levy a huge army, with which he lurked in the mountains, waiting until Lisuarte and Amadis should have exhausted their strength in mutual conflict. Being in some measure disappointed in his expectations, Aravigo held it for most expedient to fall upon Lisuarte in his retreat, whom, after a valiant resistance, he reduces to the last extremity: this is the moment which the author has chosen to exhibit the magnanimity of Amadis and to bring about a reconciliation. The instant he hears of Lisuarte's danger, our hero flies to his assistance, and the reader will anticipate with what success: Aravigo is slain, and Arcalaus made prisoner, and cooped up in a cage of iron. The father of Oriana is reconciled to her lover; and the introduction of Esplandian has its effect in hastening so desirable an event. The nuptials of Amadis and Oriana take place; and the other heroines are distributed among the champions of the Firm Island, with great regard to merit. One thing yet remained:—To finish the enchantments of the

Firm Island, it was necessary that the fairest dame in the world should enter the enchanted chamber. Need we add, that dame was Oriana? "Then was the feast spread, and the marriage-bed of Amadis and Oriana made in that chamber which they had won."

Through the whole of this long work, the characters assigned to the different personages are admirably sustained. That of Amadis is the true knight-errant. Of him it might be said in the language of Lobeira's time, that he was "true, amorous, sage, secret, bounteous, full of prowess, hardy, adventurous, and chivalrous." Don Galaor, the *Ranger* of knight-errantry, forms a good contrast to his brother. Lisuarte, even where swayed by the most unreasonable prejudices, shows as it were occasionally, his natural goodness, so as always to prevent the total alienation of our good opinion and interest. The advantage given by the author to the vassals and dependents over the *Suzerain*, shows plainly a wish to please the numerous petty princes and barons at the expense of the liege lord. This may be remarked in many romances of chivalry, particularly in those of Charlemagne and his Paladins. Even the inferior characters are well, though slightly sketched. The presumption of the Emperor, the open gallantry and dry humour of old Grumedan the king's standard-bearer, the fidelity of Gandalin, squire to Amadis, the professional manners of Master Helisabad the physician, with many others, are all in true style and costume.

The machinery introduced in Amadis does not, as Mr Southey observes, partake much of the marvellous. Arcalaus is more to be redoubted for his courage and cunning, than for his magic. Urganda is a fay similar to those which figure in the lays of Brittany, and, except her character of a prophetess, and some legerdemain tricks of transformation, has not much that is supernatural in her character.

It remains to make some observations on Mr Southey's mode of executing his translation, which appears to us marked with the hand of a master. The abridgements are judiciously made; and although some readers may think too much has still been retained, yet the objection will only occur to such as read merely for the story, without any attention to Mr Southey's more important object of exhibiting a correct example of those romances, by which our forefathers were so much delighted, and from which we may draw such curious inferences respecting their customs, their morals, and their modes of thinking. The popular romance always preserves, to a certain degree, the manners of the age in which it was written. The novels of Fielding and Richardson are even already become valuable, as a record of the English manners of the last generation. How much, then, should we prize the volumes which describe those of the era of the victors of Cressy and Poitiers! The style of Mr Southey is, in general, what he proposed, rather antique, from the form of expression, than from the introduction of obsolete phrases. It has something of the scriptural turn, and much resembles the ad-

mirable translation of Froissart.[1] Some words have inadvertently been used, which, to us, savour more of vulgarity than beseems the language of chivalry. Such are the phrases, "devilry," "Sir Knave," "Don False One," and some others. But we only mention these, to show that our general praise has not been inconsiderately bestowed.

Mr Southey has made an apology for not translating the names, which convey some meaning in the original: "I have used Beltenebros, instead of the Beautiful Darkling, or the Fair Forlorn; Florestan, instead of Forester; El Patin, instead of the Emperor Gosling; as we speak of Barbarossa, not Red-Beard; Boccanegra, not Black Muzzle; St Peter, not Stone the Apostle." We cannot help thinking this apology as unnecessary, as the examples are whimsical. Proper names are never rendered into a familiar dialect, but with a view of making them ridiculous; although they are sometimes translated into a less known language, to give them dignity. Thus, Mr Wood is said to have been converted into *Dr Lignum*, and to have gained by the exchange; while it is well known that the Portuguese ambassador, Don Pedro Francisco Correo de Sylva, was chased from the court of Charles the Second, by the ridicule attached to the nickname of *Pierre du Bois*, into which his sounding title was rendered by the Duke of Buckingham: and, surely, to talk of the Chief Consul *Good-part*, would be as absurd as the epithet

[1] He that would acquire an idea of the language of chivalry, cannot too often study the work of Bourchier Lord Berners.

would be inapplicable. As for Stone the Apostle, we have only heard of one bearing that name, who had also the fate of a prophet; for his doctrines were no otherwise honoured in his own country, than by the notice of the King's attorney-general.[1]

So much for the prose edition of *Amadis*, with the perusal of which we have been highly gratified.

We have already given it as our opinion, that the history of *Amadis* was, in its original state, a metrical romance. We remember, also, to have seen an Italian poem in ottava rima, called *Il Amadigi*, chiefly remarkable for the whimsical rule which the poet had imposed upon himself, of opening each canto with a description of the morning, and closing it with a description of the night. Mr William Stewart Rose has now favoured the public with a poetical version of the First Book of *Amadis*, containing the birth and earlier adventures of the hero, and closing with his gaining possession of Oriana.

In our remarks upon this poem, we are more inclined to blame, in some degree, Mr Rose's plan, than to find fault with the execution, which appears to us, upon the whole, to be nearly as perfect as

[1] [The Rev. Richard Stone, A. M., Rector of Norton, Essex, was, May 1808, on trial in the Consistory Court, convicted of having preached and published doctrines regarding the Messiah, subversive of the authority of certain passages in two of the Evangelists, and which when called upon to revoke he refused. Sir William Scott officially reported the case to an Ecclesiastical Convocation, in which the Bishop of London forthwith pronounced sentence of degradation, depriving Mr Stone of his clerical benefice.]

the plan admitted. Mr Rose has indeed stated his pretensions so very modestly, that perhaps we are warranted in thinking, that a culpable degree of diffidence has prevented him from assuming a tone of poetry more decided and animated.

"That the extract I now present to the public," says Mr Rose, "is closely translated, I cannot venture to affirm. I have, I confess, attempted to introduce some of those trifling ornaments, which even the simplest style of poetry imperiously demands, and have, in many instances, altered the arrangement, and very much contracted the narration of the original: I trust, however, that I shall not be convicted of having, in my trifling deviations, introduced any thing which is at variance with the spirit or tone of the celebrated romance."

With the alterations and abbreviations of Mr Rose we have not the most distant intention of quarrelling; on the contrary we think, that his too close adherence to his original is the greatest defect in the book. Mr Rose was not engaged in translating a poem, but in composing one; the story of which was adopted from a prose work. We therefore do not conceive that he was obliged to limit himself to trifling ornaments, or to the very simplest style of poetry. Even in modernizing ancient poetry, and that, too, the poetry of Chaucer, containing no small portion of fire, Dryden thought himself at liberty to heighten and enlarge the descriptions of his great master. But in his versions from prose pieces,—in the tale of Theodore and Honoria, for example,—he borrowed from Boccacio only the outline of the story; the language, the conduct, and the sentiment, were all his own, and all in the highest strain of poetry. In like manner, we

cannot see why Mr Rose should have thought himself obliged to follow in any respect the prose of Herberay, while he himself was writing poetry. We can easily conceive that a prose romance may be converted into a metrical romance or epic poem; but we cannot allow, that there ought to subsist betwixt two works, the style of which is so very different, the relations of a translation and an original work. In consequence of Mr Rose's plan, it appears to us that his poem has suffered some injury. The necessity of following out minutely the prose narrative, occasions an occasional languor in the poem, for which simple, and even elegant versification, does not atone. We will, however, frankly own, that the casual circumstance of having perused Mr Southey's prose work before the poem of Mr Rose may have had some influence upon our criticism; since our curiosity being completely forestalled, we may have felt a diminished interest in the latter from a cause not imputable to want of merit.

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obligations, has undertaken the same generous task in favour of the Cid, the real champion of a history scarcely less romantic than theirs. His work is not to be considered as the precise translation of any of the numerous histories of the Cid, but as a compilation of all that relates to him extracted from those several sources. First, a prose chronicle of the life and achievements of the Cid, printed in 1552 and 1593, which there is some reason to ascribe to Gil Diaz, a converted Moor, one of the Cid's most faithful followers. This is corrected and enlarged from a general chronicle of Spanish history. Secondly, a metrical legend, of which the Cid is the hero. This work, which fluctuates between history and romance, has a considerable degree of poetical merit, is the oldest poem in the Spanish language, and, in Mr Southey's judgment, decidedly and beyond all comparison the finest. Lastly, the translator has laid under contribution the popular ballads or romances which celebrated the feats of this renowned warrior—and were sung by minstrels, jongleurs, and glee-men, at places of festive resort. Mr Southey is not inclined to rank very highly either the authority or the antiquity of these songs, and has made little use of them in compiling his Chronicle. By these lights, however, he has guided the narrative through the following details.

Rodrigo of Bivar, "a youth strong in arms and of good customs," destined to protect his country from the Moors, was born at Burgos in the reign of King Ferrando of Castile, and in the year 1026.

His father Diego Laynez, chief of the noble house, had received a blow from the Count Don Gomez, the Lord of Gormaz. The consequences are described in a picturesque manner, and form a good specimen of this singular narrative.

"Now Diego was a man in years, and his strength had passed from him, so that he could not take vengeance, and he retired to his home, to dwell there in solitude, and lament over his dishonour. And he took no pleasure in his food, neither could he sleep by night, nor would he lift up his eyes from the ground, nor stir out of his house, nor commune with his friends, but turned from them in silence, as if the breath of his shame would taint them. Rodrigo was yet but a youth, and the count was a mighty man in arms, one who gave his voice first in the Cortes, and was held to be the best in the war, and so powerful, that he had a thousand friends among the mountains. Howbeit all these things appeared as nothing to Rodrigo when he thought of the wrong done to his father, the first which had ever been offered to the blood of Layn Calvo. He asked nothing but justice of Heaven, and of man he asked only a fair field; and his father seeing of how good heart he was, gave him his sword and his blessing. The sword had been the sword of Mudarra in former times, and when Rodrigo held its cross in his hand, he thought within himself that his arm was not weaker than Mudarra's. And he went out, and defied the count, and slew him, and smote off his head, and carried it home to his father. The old man was sitting at table, the food lying before him untasted, when Rodrigo returned, and pointing to the head which hung from the horse's collar, dropping blood, he bade him look up, for there was the herb which should restore to him his appetite: the tongue, quoth he, which insulted you is no longer a tongue, and the hand which wronged you is no longer a hand. And the old man arose and embraced his son, and placed him above him at the table, saying, that he who had brought home that head should be the head of the house of Layn Calvo."—P. 3.

This prosperous commencement was followed by a victory which Rodrigo obtained over five of the Moorish petty princes, who had allied themselves

to spoil the country of Castile. Their defeat was so complete, that they submitted to be in future the vassals of the victor. About the same time Ximena Gomez, daughter of the count (the Chimene of Corneille), came before the King, and having stated that Rodrigo had slain her father, prayed his Majesty to command him to make atonement by taking her to wife, "for God's service, and that she might be enabled to grant him her hearty pardon." Neither the King nor Rodrigo felt a desire to resist so singular a request, and the marriage was concluded accordingly. We cannot stop to relate how Rodrigo displayed his charity by plucking a foul leper out of a morass, and placing him at his own table, and how the leper proved to be no less a person than St Lazarus, who had thus disguised himself to prove the young warrior's love of God and his neighbour; nor can we narrate his single combat with Martin Gonzales, nor those repeated conquests over the Moors, which caused him to be distinguished among the vanquished by the name of *El Cid*, or THE LORD, a title which he afterwards made so famous in history. While his fame was rapidly advancing, the kingdom of Castile was convulsed with civil war. The King Don Ferrando had died, leaving three sons and one daughter, among whom, with the usual impolicy of the times, he attempted to divide his dominions. But the kings of Spain were of the blood of the Goths, which is emphatically said to be a *fierce blood;* and certainly no history, except-

ing that of the heaven-abandoned Jews, is stained with more murders, conspiracies, and unnatural civil broils. The Cid was among the subjects of Castile, whose fealty descended to the eldest son, Don Sancho, and he had no small part in the wars which that monarch made upon his brethren, Garcia and Alfonzo. When Sancho had dethroned and imprisoned both his younger brothers, he forced Alfonzo to become a monk, but he escaped from his convent, and fled to the Moors of Toledo, who received him with great hospitality. Mean while, Sancho resolved to deprive his sister Urraca of the city and dependencies of Zamora, which the King, her father, had bequeathed to her. And it was while besieging this city that he was treacherously slain by one of her adherents, who pretended to desert to his party. This gave occasion to one of those scenes which illustrate the singular manners of the age. It was resolved in the camp of the deceased monarch that the town of Zamora should be impeached for the treason committed, and for having received the traitor within her gates after the perpetration of the murder. The task of denouncing it devolved upon Diego Ordonez, a right good and noble warrior; for the Cid, who might otherwise have been expected to be foremost in the revenge of his master's death, had uniformly refused to bear arms against Donna Urraca, because they had been brought up together, and he remembered "the days that were past." Diego Ordonez came before the walls fully armed, and having

summoned to the battlements Arias Gonzalo, who commanded the city for Urraca, he pronounced this celebrated impeachment in the following words:—

"The Castilians have lost their Lord; the traitor Vellido slew him, being his vassal, and ye of Zamora have received Vellido and harboured him within your walls. Now therefore I say that he is a traitor who hath a traitor with him, if he knoweth and consenteth unto the treason. And for this I impeach the people of Zamora, the great as well as the little, the living and the dead, they who now are and they who are yet unborn; and I impeach the waters which they drink and the garments which they put on; their bread and their wine, and the very stones in their walls. If there be any one in Zamora to gainsay what I have said, I will do battle with him, and with God's pleasure conquer him, so that the infamy shall remain upon you."—P. 75.

In answer to this defiance, Gonzalo informed the champion, with great composure, that perhaps he was not aware of the law of arms in the case of impeachment of a council; which provided that the accuser should contend not with one only, but with five champions of the community successively, and his accusation was only held true if he retired victorious from this unequal contest. Ordonez, though somewhat disconcerted at this point of military law, which was confirmed by twelve alcaldes, chosen on each side, was under the necessity of maintaining his impeachment. Gonzalo, on the other hand, having first ascertained that none of the people of Zamora had been privy to the treason, resolved, that he himself and his four sons would fight in their behalf. With difficulty he is prevailed upon, by the tears and intreaties of Urraca, to let his sons first try their fortune. One of them enters the lists after his father had armed, instructed, and blessed

him. The youth is slain in the conflict; and the victor calls aloud, "Don Arias, send me another son, for this one will never fulfil your bidding." He then retires from the lists to change his horse and arms, and to refresh himself with three sops of bread and a draught of wine, agreeably to the rules of combat. The second son of Gonzalo enters the lists, and is also slain. Ordonez then lays his hand on the bar, and exclaims, "Send me another son, Don Arias, for I have conquered two, thanks be to God!" Rodrigo Arias, the eldest and strongest of the brethren, then encounters the challenger, and in the exchange of two desperate blows he receives a mortal wound; while, at the same time, the horse of Ordonez, also wounded, runs out of the lists with his rider. This was a nice point of the *duello;* for, on the one hand, the challenger had combated and vanquished his enemy; on the other, he had himself, however involuntarily, been forced out of the lists; which was such a mark of absolute defeat that even death was not held so strong. And there is a Spanish story of a duel, in which the defendant slew the challenged party; but the defunct being very corpulent and heavily armed, the victor was unable to heave him over the palisade, and after labouring the whole day to no purpose, was at sunset very rationally held to be convicted of the treason of which he had been accused; because he could not give the necessary and indispensable proof that he had vanquished the accuser. The judges of the field, in the impeachment of Zamora, did not choose positively to decide so nice a dependence. It would

be probably doing those worthy alcaldes injustice to suppose, that they were moved with compassion either for the challenger, who had still such an unequal contest before him, or for Don Arias, who having lost three of his children, was to risk his own life with that of his remaining son. But whether from unwonted feelings of pity, or because the case could not be judged, they held the third combat to be a drawn battle, and would not allow Ordonez to proceed in his accusation. Thus Don Arias, at the expense of the lives of his three gallant sons, delivered from impeachment the people of Zamora, born and unborn, living and dead, past, present, and to come, together with their waters, their food, their garments, and the stones of their battlements. It would have been, no doubt, as easy to have delivered up the murderer, whose act both parties agreed in condemning; but it is not the least fantastical part of the story, that he was suffered to elude all punishment, excepting that the Chronicle assures us he could not escape it in hell, "where he is tormented with Dathan and Abiram, and with Judas the traitor, for ever and ever."

While this scene was passing before Zamora, Alfonso, the remaining brother of the deceased Sancho, received the news of his murder; and resolved immediately to quit Toledo, where he was the guest of the Moorish monarch, Alimaymon, in order to take possession of the kingdom of Castile, to which he was now sole heir. That monarch had already heard a rumour of Sancho's death, and posted guards in the passage to prevent his guest,

now become a hostage of importance, from departing without his leave. But when Alfonso boldly and openly requested his license to return to Castile, the generous Moslem answered,—

"I thank God, Alfonso, that thou hast told me of thy wish to go into thine own country; for in this thou hast dealt loyally by me, and saved me from that which might else have happened, to which the Moors have always importuned me. And hadst thou departed privily thou couldst not have escaped being slain on taken. Now, then, go and take thy kingdom; and I will give thee whatever thou hast need of to give to thine own people, and win their hearts that they may serve thee."—P. 85.

He then requested him to swear friendship to himself and his sons; but in enumerating them, he "had a grandson whom he dearly loved, who was not named in the oath, *and therefore Don Alfonso was not bound to keep it towards him.*" And the historian records it as a high instance of generosity, that Alfonso, was so far from taking advantage of this omission, that, on a future occasion, when Alimaymon was as much in his power as he had been in Alimaymon's, he compelled the Moor to release him from the oath, but only that he might take it again fully, freely, and with all solemnity. When King Alfonso arrived in his kingdom, he found that many of his nobility, but especially the Cid, nourished a suspicion that he had been in some sort accessory to the murder of his brother Sancho. To purge himself of this guilt, the king and twelve knights as his compurgators, made oath of his innocence, upon the Gospels in the church of St Gadea, at Burgos. The Cid administered the oath with a rigour which implied the strength of his

suspicions; and the following is the account of the manner in which the King was obliged to exculpate himself in the face of his people.

"And the King came forward upon a high stage, that all the people might see him, and my Cid came to him to receive the oath; and my Cid took the book of the Gospels and opened it, and laid it upon the altar, and the King laid his hands upon it, and the Cid said unto him, 'King Don Alfonso, you come here to swear concerning the death of King Don Sancho, your brother, that you neither slew him nor took counsel for his death; say now you, and these hidalgos, if ye swear this.' And the King and the hidalgos answered and said, 'Yea, we swear it.' And the Cid said, 'If ye knew of this thing, or gave command that it should be done, may you die even such a death as your brother the King Don Sancho, by the hand of a villain whom you trust; one who is not a hidalgo, from another land, not a Castilian; and the King and the knights who were with him said Amen. And the King's colour changed; and the Cid repeated the oath unto him a second time, and the King and the twelve knights said Amen to it in like manner, and in like manner the countenance of the King was changed again. And my Cid repeated the oath unto him a third time, and the King and the knights said Amen; but the wrath of the King was exceeding great, and he said to the Cid, 'Ruydiez, why dost thou thus press me, man? To-day thou swearest me, and to-morrow thou wilt kiss my hand.' And from that day forward there was no love towards my Cid in the heart of the King."—P. 88.

The Castilian monarch having this offence deeply engraved in his remembrance, took the first occasion which offered, to banish the Cid from his dominions, on pretence of some incursions which he had made on the friendly Moors of Toledo. The Cid then assembled the relations, vassals, and retainers, whom his influence or high military reputation had attached to his person, and resolved at their head to leave Castile, and subsist by a predatory war upon the Moors.

"And as he was about to depart, he looked back upon his own home, and when he saw his hall deserted, the household chests unfastened, the doors open, no cloaks hanging up, no seats in the porch, no hawks upon the perches, the tears came into his eyes, and he said 'My enemies have done this. God be praised for all things.' And he turned toward the East, and knelt and said, 'Holy Mary Mother, and all Saints, pray to God for me, that he may give me strength to destroy all the Pagans, and to win enough from them to requite my friends therewith, and all those who follow and help me.'"—P. 97.

In passing through Burgos, no one dared to receive him into his house, the King having given strict command to the contrary; and such sorrow had the Christian people at obeying these severe injunctions, that they durst not look upon the champion as he rode through the solitary streets of their city. When he came to his *posada*, or hotel, and struck against the door with his foot, none made answer but a little girl of nine years old, who informed him of the King's command. He turned in silence from the door of the inn, rode to the church of St Mary, where "he kneeled down, and prayed with all his heart," and then encamped with his retinue on the sands near the city. There is something very striking in this picture—the silence with which the Cid receives his unjust sentence—the dignity with which he contemns the mean effort of the King to increase his distress and embarrassment;—the desolate state to which the city is reduced by the fear and pity of the inhabitants at his approach—the military train slowly parading its streets, and seeking in vain for hospitality or repose;—the swelling heart of the leader venting itself in devotion, when he saw every

house, but that of God, shut against him, are all beautiful and affecting circumstances. The next scene is of a very different nature, yet equally curious.

The Cid, like other great persons, setting out upon travel, was in great want of money to maintain his followers. And now we venture to supply an incident from the romances, which, though characteristic, Mr Southey has omitted. We copy it from a slip-shod translation, which we happen to possess, and which may serve for a sample of these ballads.

"When the Cid, the Campeador
(Of his life may God take care),
With three hundred pennon'd warriors
Forth of good Castile would fare;
Nor the champion, nor his lady,
Had of treasure, coin, or rent,
Even a single maravedi;
All in war and wassaill spent.

Then Ximene took off her garland,
Glittering like the stars of heaven,
Deck'd with gems from Eastern far land,
Which the Moorish Kings had given;
Take then this, my Roderigo;
Pledged in wealthy merchant's hand,
'Twill supply thee gold, while we go
Wanderers far in foreign land.'

Sola and her little sister,
Daughters of the noble Cid,
When they saw the chaplet's glister
Taken from their mother's head,
Wept to part with such gay jewel,
Clamour'd loud around Ximene;
'Must such garland, O, how cruel,
From our mother dear be ta'en?'

Mark'd the Cid their childish sorrow,
Heard them murmur in dismay:
'Grief enough may come to-morrow,
Give our babes their boon to-day.
Children weep for toys that glitter,
Kings and kaisars do the same:
Why their blithest days embitter?
Keep thy garland, gentle dame.'

Loud their hands the children clapping,
As their father's doom they heard,
And their arms around him wrapping,
Kist his cheeks, and strok'd his beard."

* * * * * *

Mr Southey omits this curious trait of parental tenderness, which we think peculiarly characteristic of the hero, as those who are bravest and even fiercest in war are often distinguished by unlimited indulgence to the objects of their domestic attachments.

The resource from which the Cid drew his supplies was of a questionable description, and not very dissimilar from the devices of our modern knights of industry. He sent one of his adherents, Martin Antolinez, to two wealthy Jews, named Rachael and Vidas, to demand the loan of six hundred merks, upon two chests of treasure, which the Cid meant to deposit in their hands. The sons of Israel lent a willing ear to such a proposal, but when the merks were demanded, they sagaciously observed, that "their way of business was first to take and then to give." Antolinez conducted them to the tent of the Campeador, who dazzled their optics with the exhibition of two huge and heavy chests, covered with leather of red and gold, and

secured with ribs of iron, but filled in truth with stones and sand. The Jews, forgetting the caution of their tribe, willingly agreed to advance the sum demanded on a deposit of such a promising aspect; and swore at the same time to keep the chests a full year without opening. So highly delighted were the Israelites with the bargain, that Antolinez contrived to hook out of them thirty merks for agency, to buy himself a pair of hose, a doublet, and a rich cloak. It is not the least curious part of this story, that when the Cid acquired wealth in the Moorish wars, and sent to redeem the chests with a Spanish hyperbole that they contained his honour, which was the richest treasure in the world, "the people held it for a great wonder; and there was not a place in all Burgos where they did not talk of the gentleness and loyalty of the Cid." The Jews themselves also expressed such grateful surprise as makes it plain that in the ordinary course of things, they would have been left by way of punishment for looking so indifferently after their own interest in the outset of the bargain, to indemnify themselves by the deposit. Nay, we grieve to say, that some contradictory authorities make it not improbable that the Cid consigned them to the doleful predicament of their kinsman, Shylock, to console themselves with the penalty of the bond.

The Cid, thus furnished with munition and money, sets forth against the Moors, leaving his wife and children in the charge of the Abbot of St Pedro de Cardena. It is not our intention to trace his

military exploits, in which there is frequently vivid description, but which nevertheless, from the similarity of incident, are the dullest part of this volume. The following most excellent and spirited, as well as literal translation from the poem of the Cid, is given in the notes. It is not from the pen of Mr Southey, but from that of a literary friend, who has caught the true tone of the Spanish Homer. The Cid, with his followers, sallies from the Castle of Alcoçer, where they were besieged by the Moors.

"The gates were then thrown open, and forth at once they rush'd,
The outposts of the Moorish host back to the camp were push'd;
The camp was all in tumult, and there was such a thunder
Of cymbals and of drums, as if earth would cleave in sunder.
There you might see the Moors arming themselves in haste,
And the two main battles how they were forming fast;
Horsemen and footmen mixt, a countless troop and vast.
The Moors are moving forward, the battle soon must join,
'My men, stand here in order, rang'd upon a line!
Let not a man move from his rank before I give the sign.'
Pero Bermuez heard the word, but he could not refrain.
He held the banner in his hand, he gave his horse the rein;
'You see yon foremost squadron there, the thickest of the foes,
Noble Cid, God be your aid, for there your banner goes!
Let him that serves and honours it show the duty that he owes.'
Earnestly the Cid call'd out, 'For heaven's sake be still!'
Bermuez cried, 'I cannot hold,' so eager was his will.
He spurr'd his horse, and drove him on amid the Moorish rout;
They strove to win the banner, and compast him about.
Had not his armour been so true he had lost either life or limb;
The Cid called out again, 'For heaven's sake succour him!'
Their shields before their breasts, forth at once they go,
Their lances in the rest levell'd fair and low;
Their banners and their crests waving in a row,
Their heads all stooping down toward the saddle-bow.
The Cid was in the midst, his shout was heard afar,
'I am Rui Diaz, the Champion of Bivar;

Strike amongst them, gentlemen, for sweet mercies sake!'
There where Bermuez fought amidst the foe they brake,
Three hundred banner'd knights, it was a gallant show:
Three hundred Moors they kill'd, a man with every blow;
When they wheel'd and turn'd, as many more lay slain,
You might see them raise their lances, and level them again.
There you might see the breastplates, how they were cleft in twain.
And many a Moorish shield lie scattered on the plain.
The pennons that were white mark'd with a crimson stain,
The horses running wild, whose riders had been slain."—P. 439.

There are many similar exploits described in the same animated tone; and the successes of the Cid soon led him to form plans of more permanent conquest. The dissensions of the Moors aided his views, and at length, after a tedious siege, in which the city suffered the last degree of distress, and after playing off against each other almost all the factions within its walls, the fair city of Valencia became the property of the Cid, and the seat of his power. His fame and his untarnished loyalty had by this time reconciled the Campeador to King Alfonso; so the embassy which the Cid sent to him to announce his new conquest, and to demand his wife and daughters, was most favourably received. When the ladies arrived at Valencia, they had a specimen of the manner in which the Cid had acquired, and was forced to defend his possessions. The city was beleaguered by an immense army of Moors. The Cid conducted his wife and daughters to the highest turret, from which they might see his exploits against the enemy, cheered their sinking spirits with an exclamation, "the more Moors the more gain!" sallied out and utterly discomfited the

enemy, making such mortality with his own hand, that the blood ran from the wrist to the elbow. He re-entered the town at the head of his knights.

"His wrinkled brow was seen, for he had taken off his helmet, and in this manner he entered, upon Bavieca, sword in hand. Great joy had Dona Ximena and her daughters who were awaiting him, when they saw him come riding in; and he stopt when he came to them, and said, 'Great honour have I won for you, while you kept Valencia this day! God and the Saints have sent us goodly gain, upon your coming. Look, with a bloody sword, and a horse all sweat, this is the way that we conquer the Moors! Pray God that I may live yet awhile for your sakes, and you shall enter into great honour, and they shall kiss your hands.' Then my Cid alighted when he had said this, and the ladies knelt down before him, and kissed his hand, and wished him long life."—P. 233.

The fame of the Cid's wealth led Diego and Fernando Gonzales, the Infantes of Carrion, brethren of great rank and high ancestry, to solicit the hands of his two daughters; and the Cid, at the request of King Alfonso, consented to their union. But these noblemen had ill considered their own dispositions in desiring such an union. The Cid, indeed, received them with all honour in Valencia, and bestowed on them many rich gifts, and especially his two choice swords, Colada and Tizona. But the Infantes had no taste for killing Moors, which was the principal amusement at the court of the Campeador; and although the Cid prudently disguised his knowledge of their cowardice, he could not save them from the derision of his military retainers. An unfortunate accident brought matters to a crisis. The Cid, it seems, kept a tame lion, which, one day, finding its den unbarred,

walked into the hall of the palace, where the banquet was just ended. The lion had happily dined likewise, so he paced coolly towards the head of the table, where the Cid was asleep in his chair. His captains and knights crowded around him for his defence; but his sons-in-law holding, with Bottom, that there is not a more fearful wild fowl than your lion living, threw themselves, the one behind the Campeador's chair, the other into a wine-press, where he fell into the lees and defiled himself. The Cid awaking as the lion was close upon him, held up his hand, and said, "How's this?" and the lion standing still at his voice, he arose, and taking him by the mane, led him back to his den like a tame mastiff. But the Infantes of Carrion, reading their disgrace in the ill-suppressed laughter of the attendants, adopted a suspicion that this strange scene had been contrived on purpose to put them to shame, and formed a cowardly scheme of revenge.

For this purpose, they craved the Cid's permission to return to their own country of Carrion, which he readily granted. On the road they led their wives into a forest, where they stripped them, beat them with the girths of their horses, mangled them with their spurs, and left them for dead upon the spot. Here they were found, and brought back to Valencia; and the Cid, incensed at this deadly affront, demanded justice before the King and the Cortes of Castile. The investigation was conducted with great form and solemnity. The Cid sent to the place of meeting an ivory throne which he had won at Valencia, "a right noble seat, and

of subtle work," which gave rise to much invidious discussion among the Castilian nobles, until Alfonso decided that the Cid should occupy the ivory seat which he had won like a good knight. He then shaped his demand of satisfaction from the Infantes of Carrion into three counts. In the first place, he demanded restitution of the two good swords Colada and Tizona, which being implements they had no great occasion for, were readily resigned His second demand was for the treasures he had bestowed on them with his daughters. The Infantes, who had quarrelled with their wives but not with their portions, resisted this strenuously, but were obliged to comply by the sentence of the cortes. This account being cleared with no small difficulty, the Cid a third time demanded justice, and stating the injuries done to his daughters, insisted on personal satisfaction from the Infantes. This was the hardest chapter of all; the Infantes could only allege that they had unwarily married beneath their rank.

"Then Count Don Garcia rose and said, 'Come away, Infantes, and let us leave the Cid sitting like a bridegroom in his ivory chair: he lets his beard grow and thinks to frighten us with it!' The Campeador put up his hand to his beard, and said, 'What hast thou to do with my beard, count? Thanks be to God, it is long because it hath been kept for my pleasure;[1] never son of woman hath taken me by it; never son of Moor or of Christian hath plucked it, as I did yours in your castle of Cabra, count, when I took your castle of Cabra, and took you by the beard; there was not a boy of the host but had his pull at it. What I plucked then is not yet methinks grown even!'" —P. 296.

[1] *Per esa vi luenga que adelicio fue creada.*
*Poema del Cid.* 3294.

After a very stormy altercation it is at last settled, that the Infantes of Carrion, together with their uncle and abettor, should "do battle" against three of the Cid's knights. The Infantes are defeated, and declared guilty of treason. This singular story is given at length, and with all those minute details which place the very circumstance before our eyes. There is also a literal poetical translation from that part of the poem which represents the scene in the Cortes and in the lists. It is by the same hand, and in the same spirited style, as the account of the sally which we have already quoted.

The Cid takes leave of the King, and returns to Valencia, where he bestows his daughters on the Infantes of Arragon and Navarre, two princes of higher rank and more estimable qualities than those whom he had punished. At length, when far advanced in years, he is once more besieged in his city of Valencia, by an immense army of Moors, and is warned by a vision that his end approaches, but that God had granted him grace to defeat the Moors even after his decease. Upon this intimation, the Cid prepares for death, and calling for a precious balsam with which the Soldan of Persia had presented him, he mingled it with rose-water, and tasted nothing else for seven days, during which, though he grew weaker and weaker, yet his countenance appeared even fairer and fresher than before. He then directed that his family and retainers should leave the city after his death, taking with them his dead body, and return to Castile.

Having settled his worldly affairs, and ghostly concerns, "this noble baron yielded up his soul, which was pure and without spot, to God," in the year 1099, and the 73d of his life. The body having been washed and embalmed, appeared, by virtue of the balsam on which he had lived, as fresh and fair as if alive. It was supported in an upright state by a thin frame of wood, and the whole being made fast to a right noble saddle, this retinue prepared to leave Valencia.

"When it was midnight, they took the body of the Cid, fastened to the saddle as it was, and placed it upon his horse Bavieca, and fastened the saddle well: and the body sate so upright and well, that it seemed as if he was alive. And it had on painted hose of black and white, so cunningly painted, that no man who saw them would have thought but that they were grieves and cuishes, unless he had laid his hand upon them; and they put on it a surcoat of green sendal, having his arms blazoned thereon, and a helmet of parchment, which was cunningly painted, that every one might have believed it to be iron; and his shield was hung round his neck, and they placed the sword Tisona in his hand, and they raised his arm, and fastened it up so subtilly, that it was a marvel to see how upright he held the sword. And the bishop Don Hieronymo went on one side of him, and the trusty Gil Dias on the other, and he led the horse Bavieca, as the Cid had commanded him. And when all this had been made ready, they went out from Valencia at midnight, through the gate of Roseroe, which is towards Castile. Pero Bermudez went first with the banner of the Cid, and with him five hundred knights who guarded it, all well appointed. And after these came all the baggage. Then came the body of the Cid, with an hundred knights, all chosen men, and behind them Dona Ximena with all her company, and six hundred knights in the rear. All these went out so silently, and with such a measured pace, that it seemed as if there were only a score. And by the time that they had all gone out it was broad day."—P. 336.

Betwixt surprise and miracle, the Moors were completely routed; and the Christians, having

spoiled their camp, retired to Castile. But when they proposed to put the body in a coffin, Ximene refused to consent, saying, that while his countenance remained so comely, her children and grandchildren should behold the face of their father. At length it was resolved to set him in his ivory chair, on the right hand of the high altar in the cathedral of Toledo, dressed in noble robes, which were regularly changed, and placing in his left hand his sword Tizona in its scabbard, and in the right the strings of his mantle. Ximena retired into the neighbouring monastery, and Gil Diaz, the Cid's secretary, devoted his life to attend upon her, and upon the good steed Bavieca. Mean while the Cid continued for seven years to sit beside the altar. At the expiration of this period, a false Jew, who had hid himself in the church to have the pleasure of plucking that beard which was never plucked when its owner was living, occasioned the body to change its posture. For the "circumcised dog" had no sooner advanced his unhallowed fingers to that noble beard, than the Cid, letting go the strings of his mantle, drew his sword a palm's breadth out of the sheath. The natural consequence of this was the conversion of the Jew. After this miracle, no one ventured to change his dress, or to attempt to sheathe the sword. At length, after sitting ten years in state without alteration, the *nose* of the champion began to change colour. Whether the noses of the attendants felt any sympathetic affection is not said, but the Cid was removed to a vault before the altar, seated, as before, in his ivory chair,

with his sword in his hand, and his shield and banner hung upon the walls.

Whether the ivory chair decayed faster than the Cid we know not; but the body was taken from it, placed in a stone coffin, and, after some intermediate translations, finally interred in the chapel of the monastery of Cardena, where "it remains to the present day."

We have not room to tell of the godly end of his wife Ximena, or the attention bestowed on his horse Bavieca, who, having comported himself with laudable spirit and fidelity through the whole of this history, of which he forms no very inconsiderable part, was never mounted by any one after his master's decease, and was buried before the gate of the monastery with the trusty Gil Diaz, his guardian. But we cannot help observing a curious coincidence between an ancient Irish romance, called the death of Cucholinn, and the remarkable circumstances said to have attended the funeral rites of the Cid. Cucholinn (the Cuthullin of the pseudo Ossian) was chief of the warriors of the Red Branch, as they were called, and champion of Ulster. He was mortally wounded in a battle, through the wiles of an enchantress called Meive. Feeling death approach, he thus addresses his foster-brother:—

"'But accompany me, Laogh, to yonder rock, that I may there die, and make my final departure. Let me be supported by resting my breast against that portion of it which advances from the rest; put this sword into my hand, and tie it fast to my wrist, and place my spear and shield as they ought to be; and when my enemies shall see me in that manner, their fear

and dread will be still so great, that they will not venture to come and cut off my head, and Connel Cearnach will arrive in time to prevent that body which I quit from being treated with indignity.' Cucholinn walked afterwards towards the rock, and Laogh durst not offer to support him, or draw nigh him, till he had arrived at the place he had chosen, and rested his breast against that part of the rock which projected as he had remarked; and as he leaned against the rock. he put his hand upon his heart, and uttered a moan, saying, 'Till this day I vow and swear, by the gods of the elements, that I knew not but that this heart was of iron or stone; and had I thought it to have been of flesh and blood, perhaps half of the feats of chivalry, and of the noble deeds that I have done, would not have been performed by me! And now, Laogh, when thou seest Eirir, tell her that my affection never hath strayed from her, that through my whole life I have loved her alone, nor ever saw that woman I would have exchanged for her. Relate to her, to Conner, to Connel, and to the men of Ulster, my late actions and my past battles; enumerate to them the numbers I have slain, and the days whereon my enemies have fallen, either by my sword or the arrows from my quiver, from the rising up until the setting of the sun.'

"Laogh obeyed the orders of Cucholinn, and settled him with his face towards the enemy's camp, and placed his spear and shield by his shoulder, and put his sword into his hand as if ready for combat, and as he grasped it, he expired.

"When Meive and her confederates beheld him placed in that manner, they imagined it was some scheme concerted by Cucholinn to draw them into an ambuscade, and they durst not draw nigh unto him. 'Where is Babh' (or Bava), cried Meive. The sorceress replied, that she was there to fulfill her commands. She sent her therefore to discover if Cucholinn was alive or dead. Bava took the shape of a crow and flew around him; when, having discovered that his spirit was fled, she perched upon his shield; and when the enemy saw this, they came forward; and when they came up to him and found that it was impossible to force his sword out of his hand, 'Cut the sinews of his wrist,' said Lughy, son of Conrec, 'and the sword will fall.' It was done; but as it fell down, it cut off the hands of thirty of the sons of their chieftains, who were looking up to behold that deed done, and this was the last exploit that the arms of that hero performed."

Leaving it to the antiquaries of Ierne to consi-

der whether there is any connexion between these stories, we hasten to conclude the article with a few short observations on the information which we may derive from this curious work.

The character of the Cid, who is held up as a model of perfection, contains many points which seem inconsistent with the more refined notions of chivalry. We say nothing of the cruelty which the "Perfect One," as the author frequently calls him, practised without compunction, especially towards his prisoners, whom he usually tortured, to force a discovery of their treasures. And perhaps as the following abominable cruelty was perpetrated on circumcised infidels, it might not be a great blot in his escutcheon. It occurred during the siege of Valencia.

"So he ordered proclamation to be made so loud that all the Moors upon the walls could hear, bidding all who had come out from the town to return into it, or he would burn as many as he should find; and saying also that he would slay all who came out from that time forth. Nevertheless they continued to let themselves down from the walls, and the Christians took them without his knowledge. But as many as he found he burnt alive before the walls, so that the Moors could see them; in one day he burnt eighteen, and cast others alive to the dogs, who tore them in pieces."—P. 194.

This might be all *selon les regles;* but we allude to the whole tenor of his policy with the Moorish chiefs of Valencia, which was of a very indirect and crooked kind, in which his promise was forfeited more than once, and to more than one person. This was a breach of honour on the part of the "Happy one, whom God created in a lucky hour," which seems to derogate from his knightly charac-

ter. His mode of conducting the charge against the Infantes of Carrion, by which he secured restitution before he demanded revenge for his injured honour, argues a cool and interested mode of reason better becoming an attorney than a warrior. All these are, no doubt, qualified by his extreme and punctilious loyalty towards the king who had exiled him; his warm affection for his family; and his generosity to his vassals, and sometimes to his enemies. Yet, upon the whole, the Cid Ruy Diaz forms no exception to Froissart's general rule, that the knights of Spain had not attained the highest and most refined chivalry practised in France and England. And his story leaves us at a loss whether he had most of the fox, the tiger, or the lion in his disposition; for he seems to have been at least as crafty and cruel as he was brave. It is also worthy of remarking, that the supreme respect, enjoined by the laws of knighthood, to the fair sex, does not appear in this romance. The females all act a subordinate part, and that irreconcilable with their being persons of any influence. It may be hardly fair to quote the beating which the sons-in-law of the Cid bestow upon their wives, as proof of general manners. Yet this castigation, though utterly *extra modum*, was not much wondered at, except in relation to the power and generosity of the Cid, father of the patients. The counts appeal to the whole cortes, whether they had not a title to beat maids of low degree with their girths, and tear them with their long-rowelled spurs; and issue was joined upon an allegation, that the daughters of the

Cid were of too high a rank to be subjected to such discipline. Ximena, also, makes a sorry figure in the tale; she comes before the king to ask the hand of the man who had killed her father—a step which surely argued a degraded state in society, and a want of free will. The daughters of the Cid are, with very little ceremony, and without at all consulting their own choice, bestowed on one set of husbands and transferred to another: and, lastly, the passion, or even the word love, does not occur in the whole volume. It is highly probable, that, in this respect, the manners of the Spaniards were tinged by those of their Mahommedan conquerors, from whom they had caught the Oriental contempt of the female sex.

Many other marks of resemblance between those nations might be pointed out; nor indeed, upon the whole, do the Moors appear to have been a more unamiable race than the Castilian Christians. The volume contains many splendid instances of their generosity and good faith, which are sometimes but indifferently requited by the Christians. It is true, the situation of the Spanish Moors was already become degraded. They were a luxurious people, broken with domestic factions; split into petty principalities; superior to their Christian foes in the arts of peace, therefore affording a tempting prospect of plunder; inferior to them in the art of war, therefore an easy prey. Accordingly, they were considered as the common enemy; the *feræ naturæ*, whom every iron-clad champion had a natural right to hunt down and plunder; while, in

obeying so tempting an impulse, he believed himself to be also doing God service.

Yet the constant wars between the Spaniards and the Moors were, from their very continuance, subjected to some degree of rule and moderation. The war was not directed, as in the crusades, to mutual extermination. The Spanish Christians hated the Moors and spoiled them, but their aspect and dress had not for them that novelty which, in the eyes of other nations, removed the infidels almost out of the class of human beings, and added peculiar zest to the pleasure of killing them. The Cid, when he had fairly got possession of Valencia administered justice indifferently to Moor and Christian; and leaving his "paynim" subjects in possession of their property, contented himself with levying a tithe as an acknowledgment of sovereignty. Of the Moorish manners we do not learn much from this curious volume; but the lamentation over the ruin of Valencia (p. 179) is an interesting specimen of Arabian poetry.

It is sufficiently obvious, that whether the history of the Cid be real or fictitious, it is exceedingly valuable as a singular picture of manners of which we know little or nothing. The history, however, of the chief of a band of adventurers, making war on his own account, and becoming the prince of a conquered territory, with all his intermediate acts, is not so interesting as to lead us to investigate its authenticity. That the Cid was a real existing personage, distinguished by his exploits against the Moors, cannot be doubted. But although his history does not present a more romantic air than the

real chronicles of the age, and has not above a very conscionable proportion of miracles and prodigies, there is reason to believe that it is in many particulars fictitious. The conquest of Valencia seems particularly suspicious. In short, the whole may be dismissed with the account given of the adventures in Montesino's cave, by the ape of Ginez de Passamente, *que parte de las cosas son falsas y parte verisimiles.*

The faults which we have to notice belong to the style. This is an imitation of that of scripture; it is, we think, sometimes too periphrastical, and sometimes it abounds in unnecessary repetitions. It retains also marks of its derivation from metrical romance in the detail and accumulation of particulars, which though sometimes striking, at other times degenerate into mere expletives. Thus we have a march described with, "Who ever saw in Castile so many a precious mule and so many a good going palfrey, and so many great horses, and so many goodly streamers set up, goodly spears and shields adorned with gold and with silver, and mantles, and skins, and such sandals of Adria." This is all very well and very animated; but why should we again, only six lines below, have a repetition of "many a great mule, and many a palfrey, and many a good horse," &c. &c. &c. As Mr Southey was compiling a history, and not making a literal translation of a single work, he would, we think, have been justifiable in compressing one of these descriptions. There are, besides, sundry odd phrases which we could have wished amended. Thus the pursuers making havoc among a flying army, are said to

"punish them badly;" we have elsewhere "happy man was his dole," and other expressions more venerable from simplicity than elegance. We dare not proceed too far in these censures, because Mr Southey has informed us, that reviewers, in censuring his introduction of new words, have only shown their own ignorance of the English language. Despite of this "retort churlish," however, we must say, that if a word be so old that it has become new again, it is unfit, at least generally speaking, for modern use. We have a title to expect payment in the current coin of the day, and may except against that which bears the effigies of King Cnut, as justly as if it had been struck by Mr Southey himself. It also seems to us that the story would have been improved by abridging some of the Cid's campaigns, if the conscience of the editor had permitted him.

While we are on the subject of faults, we may just remark that Mr Southey appears to have mistaken the sense of two or three Spanish terms; but his knowledge of the language is so deep and extensive, that we must, in justice to him, attribute the oversight to a momentary lapse of attention.

But in noticing these defects, we offer our sincere gratitude to Mr Southey for a most entertaining volume, edited with a degree of taste and learning, which few men in England could have displayed. The introduction and notes are full of the most ample and extraordinary details concerning the state of Spain in the middle ages, from works of equal curiosity and scarcity.

# ARTICLE III.

## SOUTHEY'S LIFE OF JOHN BUNYAN.

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[*The Pilgrim's Progress, with a Life of* John Bunyan. *By* Robert Southey, Esq. LL.D.—*Quarterly Review*, 1830.]

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It has been the boast of our ancestors to improve the constitution of their country by the address with which they have infused a new spirit into old institutions, like the skilful architect who contrives to make the turrets of a feudal castle subservient to the accommodations of modern hospitality. Thus it is, that although Gibbon had, with good reason, stigmatized the nature of the task imposed on the poets laureate during the reign of George III. and his predecessors, as the establishment of a stipendiary bard, who every year, and under all circumstances, was bound to furnish a certain measure of praise and verse such as might be sung in presence of the monarch, the taste of our late amiable sovereign preferred, to the total abolition of the office,

substituting for its old routine of drudgery the occasional exercise of varied talent and unequalled erudition in illustrating the antiquities and peculiarities of our national literature. Nor could Mr Southey have chosen a more interesting point for illustration, than the circumstances under which John Bunyan, in spite of a clownish and vulgar education, rose into a degree of popularity scarce equalled by any English writer.

This "Spenser of the people," as Mr D'Israeli happily calls him, was born at Elstow, near Bedford, in the year 1628. His parents were the meanest, according to his own expression, of all families in the land. They were workers in brass, or, in common parlance, *tinkers*, whose profession bore to that of a brazier the same relation which the cobbler's does to the shoemaker's. It was not followed, however, by Bunyan's father as an itinerant calling, which leads Mr Southey to wonder why it should have come to be esteemed so mean. We believe the reason to be that the tinkers' craft is, in Great Britain, commonly practised by gipsies; and we surmise the probability that Bunyan's own family, though reclaimed and settled, might have sprung from this caste of vagabonds; that they were not, at all events, originally English, would seem the most natural explanation of young John's asking his father, whether he was not of Jewish extraction? (expecting thereby to found on the promises made in the Old Testament to the seed of Abraham).

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up with, and speedily forgot, the slender proportion of schooling then accessible to the children of the poor in England. He was by nature of enthusiastic feelings, and so soon as the subject of religion began to fix his attention, his mind appears to have been agonized with the retrospect of a mispent youth. A quick and powerful imagination was at work on a tender conscience; for it would appear that his worst excesses fell far short of that utter reprobation to which he conceived them entitled. The young tinker, in the wildest period of his life, had never been addicted to intemperance, or to unlawful intercourse with women. He seems to have wrought for his family as an honest and industrious man, and early became the affectionate husband of a deserving wife. His looser habits, in short, seem only to have been those which every ignorant and careless young fellow, of the lowest ranks, falls into; and, probably, profane swearing, sabbath-breaking, and a mind addicted to the games and idle sports of Vanity Fair, were the most important stains upon the character of his youth:—as Mr Southey sums it up, John Bunyan had been *a blackguard*. Repentance, however, in proportion to the imaginative power of the mind which it agitates, regards past offences with a microscopic eye; nor can we wonder that such an ardent spirit, speaking, in his own energetic language, of his youthful faults, should paint them in blacker colours than the truth authorized. Bunyan had practised none of those debaucheries by which the heart of the epicurean is hardened against all feelings save

those which can tend to his own gratification; and if he had lost the valuable time for instruction afforded by the Christian Sabbath, the hours had been given to folly rather than to vice. We are far, indeed, from desiring to treat these errors with indifference,—they are those with which crime almost always begins its career. But it is interesting to discover the exact amount of transgression for which this strong mind was afflicted with the deepest agonies of remorse.

When it pleased Heaven to awaken this remarkable man to a sense of his own iniquities, the great Civil War was fast approaching; "the land was burning." The nation was divided at once respecting the best form of government for their protection on this side time, and the surest means by which they might obtain felicity hereafter. Of John Bunyan's politics we know nothing, except that he was enrolled for a short time in the Parliamentary army—of his spiritual experience he has left an ample record. A few pious persons, with whom he became acquainted, were of the sect called Baptists, and were esteemed by the new convert, who heard them talk of the mysteries of our religion with joy, hope, and comfort, as a species of saints whose confidence and serenity argued the security of their calling and election; while, on his own condition and prospects, he could look only with a sensation resembling despair.

Such views, natural to an ardent and enthusiastic mind, upon the first awakening of the feelings of conscience, were encouraged by the strict ideas

of Calvinistic predestination, which formed the foundation of the creed of Bunyan's sectarian friends. He has described at length the wild tumult of his thoughts, when endeavouring to determine a point which all the schoolmen on earth must be inadequate to solve, and in the course of this fearful state of mind Mr Southey traces the germ of the Pilgrim's Progress. In a species of vision or waking reverie, he compared his own anxious condition with the sanctified repose of the members of the little Baptist congregation which he had joined.

"'I saw,' he says, 'as if they were on the sunny side of some high mountain, there refreshing themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun, while I was shivering and shrinking in the cold, afflicted with frost, snow, and dark clouds. Methought also betwixt me and them, I saw a wall that did compass about this mountain; now through this wall my soul did greatly desire to pass; concluding that if I could, I would even go into the very midst of them, and there also comfort myself with the heat of their sun. About this wall I thought myself to go again and again, still prying as I went, to see if I could find some way or passage, by which I might enter therein; but none could I find for some time. At the last I saw, as it were, a narrow gap, like a little doorway in the wall, through which I attempted to pass. Now the passage being very strait and narrow, I made many offers to get in, but all in vain, even until I was wellnigh quite beat out by striving to get in. At last with great striving, methought I at first did get in my head; and after that, by a sideling striving, my shoulders, and my whole body: then was I exceeding glad, went and sat down in the midst of them, and so was comforted with the light and heat of their sun. Now the mountain and wall, &c., were thus made out to me. The mountain signified the Church of the living God; the sun that shone thereon, the comfortable shining of his merciful face on them that were within: the wall, I thought, was the word, that did make separation between the Christians and the world; and the gap which was in the wall, I thought, was Jesus Christ, who is in the way to God

the Father. But forasmuch as the passage was wonderful narrow, even so narrow, that I could not but with great difficulty enter in thereat, it showed me that none could enter into life but those that were in downright earnest; and unless also they left that wicked world behind them; for here was only room for body and soul, but not for body and soul and sin.' "—P. xix.

Doubts, qualms, fears, returned upon him, notwithstanding the metaphorical assurance which this vision had conveyed to his mind. Whatever wild and wayward shadow streamed across the restless region of his thoughts, was arrested like a suspicious-looking person in a besieged city, brought to account for itself, and treated with an attention which the mere suggestion of casual fancy could hardly deserve. It is perhaps in this sense that the human heart is said in scripture to be abominably wicked, since not only without our will, but in positive opposition to our best exertions, sinful suggestions profane the thoughts of the wisest, and foul emotions sully the heart of the most pure. The wise and well-informed shrink with horror from the phantoms of guilt which thus intrude themselves, and pray to Heaven for strength to enable them to reject such pollution from their thoughts, and for power to fix their attention upon better objects. But the dark dread of his possible exclusion from the pale of the righteous rushed ever and anon with such vivid force on the mind of the unfortunate Bunyan, as to make him accept for fatal arguments against himself, the wildest and most transitory coinage of his own fancy, while, to fill up every pause, he was tortured by the equally terrible suspicion that he was guilty of the most

unpardonable of crimes, as an habitual doubter of the efficacy of divine grace.

"In an evil hour (says Southey) were the doctrines of the Gospel sophisticated with questions which should have been left in the schools for those who are unwise enough to employ themselves in excogitations of useless subtlety! Many are the poor creatures whom such questions have driven to despair and madness, and suicide; and no one ever more narrowly escaped from such a catastrophe than Bunyan."

In this state of anxiety and agony, the victim of his own ingenuity in self-torment, unable to escape from the idea that he was forsaken of God—that he was predestined to eternal reprobation—that the scriptures, the source of joy and comfort to others, were to him only as a roll like that seen by Ezekiel, full of curses and denunciations of evil—John Bunyan was at length induced to lay his case open to the teacher of the anabaptist congregation—Gifford by name, a good man, we doubt not, but little qualified to give sound advice to such a mind so tortured. He had been a soldier among the royalists, and a sad profligate, and was now settled down into about as wild an enthusiastic as our tinker himself. He advised his proselyte to receive no religious conviction or calling as indisputable, which had not been confirmed to his individual self by evidence from Heaven!

Bunyan had ere now formed to himself an hypothesis accounting for the blasphemous thoughts which distracted his mind, imputing them, in short, to the immediate suggestion of the devil; and how he clung to it we may discover from one striking passage in Christian's progress through the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

"One thing I would not let slip: I took notice that now poor Christian was so confounded, that he did not know his own voice; and thus I perceived it: just when he was come over against the mouth of the burning pit, one of the wicked ones got behind him, and stepped up softly to him, and whisperingly suggested many grievous blasphemies to him, which he verily thought had proceeded from his own mind. This put Christian more to it than any thing that he met with before, even to think that he should now blaspheme him that he loved so much before: yet, if he could have helped it, he would not have done it; but he had not the discretion either to stop his ears, or to know from whence these blasphemies came."—P. 83.

Thus furnished with a theory to account for the black suggestions which (as he says) he dared not to utter, either with word or pen, Bunyan was now taught by his mistaken pastor to look for a counterbalance in the equally direct inspirations of Heaven. So strong is the power of the human imagination, that he who seriously expects to see miracles, does not long expect them in vain. He spent hours in debating whether, in the strength of newly adopted faith, he should not command the puddles on the highway to be dry, and the dry places to be wet; and if he shrunk from so presumptuous an experiment, it was only because he had not courage to think of facing the despair which must have ensued, if the sign, which he would fain have demanded, had been refused to his prayer. Mr Southey thus describes his condition, while engaged in balancing the support and comfort which he received from Heaven with the discountenance and criminal suggestions inspired by the enemy of mankind:—

"Shaken continually thus by the hot and cold fits of a spiritual ague, his imagination was wrought to a state of excitement in

which its own shapings became vivid as realities, and affected him more forcibly than impressions from the external world. He heard sounds as in a dream; and as in a dream held conversations which were inwardly audible, though no sounds were uttered, and had all the connexion and coherency of an actual dialogue. Real they were to him in the impression which they made, and in their lasting effect; and even afterwards, when his soul was at peace, he believed them, in cool and sober reflection, to have been more than natural. Some days he was much 'followed,' he says, by these words of the Gospel, 'Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you!' He knew that it was a voice from within,—and yet it was so articulately distinct, so loud, and called, as he says, so strongly after him, that once in particular, when the words Simon! Simon! rung in his ears, he verily thought some man had called to him from a distance behind, and though it was not his name, supposed nevertheless that it was addressed to him, and looked round suddenly to see by whom. As this had been the loudest, so it was the last time that the call sounded in his ears; and he imputes it to his ignorance and foolishness at that time, that he knew not the reason of it; for soon, he says, he was feelingly convinced that it was sent from heaven, as an alarm, for him to provide against the coming storm,—a storm which 'handled him twenty times worse than all he had met with before.'"—P. 25.

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up with, and speedily forgot, the slender proportion of schooling then accessible to the children of the poor in England. He was by nature of enthusiastic feelings, and so soon as the subject of religion began to fix his attention, his mind appears to have been agonized with the retrospect of a mispent youth. A quick and powerful imagination was at work on a tender conscience; for it would appear that his worst excesses fell far short of that utter reprobation to which he conceived them entitled. The young tinker, in the wildest period of his life, had never been addicted to intemperance, or to unlawful intercourse with women. He seems to have wrought for his family as an honest and industrious man, and early became the affectionate husband of a deserving wife. His looser habits, in short, seem only to have been those which every ignorant and careless young fellow, of the lowest ranks, falls into; and, probably, profane swearing, sabbath-breaking, and a mind addicted to the games and idle sports of Vanity Fair, were the most important stains upon the character of his youth:—as Mr Southey sums it up, John Bunyan had been *a blackguard.* Repentance, however, in proportion to the imaginative power of the mind which it agitates, regards past offences with a microscopic eye; nor can we wonder that such an ardent spirit, speaking, in his own energetic language, of his youthful faults, should paint them in blacker colours than the truth authorized. Bunyan had practised none of those debaucheries by which the heart of the epicurean is hardened against all feelings save

unsettle his reason, was seen in one of his contemporaries, Lawrence Claxton by name, whose rare treatise, containing the impudent avowal of his vicious life, lies now before us, and is so apposite to the subject as to claim some notice. This person was prevailed upon, so late as 1660, at the instigation, he says, "of a man of no mean parts or parentage in this Reason's Kingdom, who had much importuned him to that effect, to publish the various leadings forth of his spirit through each dispensation, from the year 1630 to the year 1660;" in order that, as Mr Claxton expresses it,[1] "he might appear stripped stark naked of his former formal righteousness and professed wickedness, and, instead thereof, clothed with innocency of life, perfect assurance, and sight for discerning by the spirit of the Revelation." Our limits, as well as our inclinations, render it impossible for us to give more than a very general analysis. Some of Claxton's debaucheries are too coarse and indecent to permit them being more than indicated. Yet it may not be useless to trace the career of a man, who started under a vague apprehension of an extreme tender-

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natural talents as Bunyan, is connected with that of his age; nor can we so well conceive the dangers of fanaticism, as when we behold the struggles of so pure and so powerful a spirit involved in its toils. It may be easily supposed, that, of those around him, there were many who fell into the same temptations, and struggled with them in vain; and that, in not a few instances, the doctrine which summoned all men to the exercise of the private judgment, as it was called, led the way to the wildest, most blasphemous, and most fatal excesses. Don Quixote's balsam was not a more perilous medicine.

Of this Southey gives one instance, in the case of a poor man, who, having the merit of being amongst the first whose conversation called Bunyan to a sense of religion, was himself so unable to endure the illumination of which he conveyed the earliest spark to so notable a person, that he became a Ranter, and wallowed in the foulest vice, as one who imagined himself secure of his election, and whom, consequently, the grossest sin could not debar from predestined happiness. This unfortunate man loved to tell Bunyan that he had run through all religions, and, in his persuasion, had fallen upon the right way at last; a way, namely, which, in assuring to him an unalienable right to heaven, freed him from observing any limits in the indulgence of his passions during the time he remained on earth. Another instance of the moral danger of indulging such reveries as wrecked the peace of Bunyan for three years, though, fortunately, they were unable either to corrupt his heart, or to

unsettle his reason, was seen in one of his contemporaries, Lawrence Claxton by name, whose rare treatise, containing the impudent avowal of his vicious life, lies now before us, and is so apposite to the subject as to claim some notice. This person was prevailed upon, so late as 1660, at the instigation, he says, "of a man of no mean parts or parentage in this Reason's Kingdom, who had much importuned him to that effect, to publish the various leadings forth of his spirit through each dispensation, from the year 1630 to the year 1660;" in order that, as Mr Claxton expresses it,[1] "he might appear stripped stark naked of his former formal righteousness and professed wickedness, and, instead thereof, clothed with innocency of life, perfect assurance, and sight for discerning by the spirit of the Revelation." Our limits, as well as our inclinations, render it impossible for us to give more than a very general analysis. Some of Claxton's debaucheries are too coarse and indecent to permit them being more than indicated. Yet it may not be useless to trace the career of a man, who started under a vague apprehension of an extreme tender-

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be called forth to speak a word or two for mutual edification. Full of scriptural thoughts and language, and having the Scriptures themselves at command, the author of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, was, nevertheless, totally void of that confidence which made so many in those days rush *per saltum* on the task of the preacher. He laboured painfully that he might speak persuasively. His attention to his new duties seems, in some degree, to have relieved his own dubious state of mind; yet he flinched not from the task of preaching the same severely Calvinistic doctrine under the strictness of which he himself still groaned internally. The following are his own remarkable expressions:—

"'This part of my work,' says he, 'I fulfilled with great sense; for the terrors of the law, and guilt for my transgressions, lay heavy upon my conscience. I preached what I felt—what I smartingly did feel—even that under which my poor soul did groan and tremble to astonishment. Indeed, I have been as one sent to them from the dead. I went myself in chains to preach to them in chains; and carried that fire in my own conscience that I persuaded them to be aware of. I can truly say, that when I have been to preach, I have gone full of guilt and terror even to the pulpit door, and there it hath been taken off, and I have been at liberty in my mind until I have done my work; and then immediately, even before I could get down the pulpit stairs, I have been as bad as I was before. Yet God carried me on, but surely with a strong hand; for neither guilt nor hell could take me off my work.'"—P. xlviii.

Besides his preaching, in which he seems now to have acted as a kind of volunteer auxiliary to one John Burton, he was also engaged in religious controversy, and that with the then frantic Quakers, who, thanks to time and toleration, have now settled down into the gentlest and mildest of

religionists. Bunyan accused the Quakers of denying some of the most essential doctrines of Christianity; and Edward Burroughs, his antagonist, objected to our author his taking reward for his services, and going shares with his principal, Burton, in £150, which he affirms was received as that pastor's yearly salary. To this charge Bunyan returned an explicit denial, alleging that he wrought with his hands for his daily living, and for that of his family, and solemnly affirming, that he distributed the knowledge which God had given him freely, and not for filthy lucre's sake.

The Quakers could only attack his principles and his character; but the persecuting spirit which had, by a not unnatural reaction, taken possession for a time of the government, imposed direct personal and penal consequences for nonconformity. Considerable efforts were made after the restoration for the suppression of these sectaries, who were held as the principal cause of the late civil war, and of the death of Charles I. John Bunyan was cited before the justices as a person in the habit of going about preaching, although the charge does not appear to have been mingled with any specific impeachment of his political or religious opinions. He refused to find security to abstain from his itinerant ministry, and he was, of course, sent to prison, resigned and contented with his captivity, so—"it might be the awakening of the saints in the country, or otherwise serve the cause of vital religion." The fruit of his submission to the will of God was probably a state of peace of

mind and contentment, such as in his lifetime he had not hitherto enjoyed.

This persecution was no sudden storm, which was to pour forth its violence, and then be hushed to rest. Bunyan dwelt no less than twelve years in Bedford jail rather than surrender the liberty of preaching, which he considered as his birth-right; and the manner in which he employed his leisure during this seclusion constitutes his great distinction as a benefactor to the Christian world; this he has expressed himself, in the first sentence of his memorable work:—"As I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where there was a den, where I laid me down to sleep; and as I slept I dreamed a dream." The allegorical den is on the margin explained to be the *prison* where the author sustained so many years' confinement.

It is true, Bunyan's captivity was neither rigorous nor continued. He was, indeed, deprived of the power of working at his usual occupation of a tinker. "He was as effectually taken away from his pots and kettles," says one of his former biographers, "as the Apostles were from mending their nets;" but he learned to make tagged thread laces, and thus supported his family by the labour of his hands. The jailer of Bedford was a "gentle provost," and at length he indulged his respected prisoner with all, and more than all, the liberty which he could grant with safety to himself. John Bunyan was suffered to go abroad at pleasure, visited the various assemblies of his sect, and was

actually chosen pastor of the Anabaptist congregation in the town. He accepted the office, and being thus only a prisoner on parole, he appears to have been able to exercise its duties freely and usefully—for as it is well expressed by Mr Southey—"the fever of his enthusiasm had spent itself; the asperity of his opinions had softened as his mind enlarged."

About sixteen years before his death, in 1672, he was at length released entirely from a confinement which, for at least five years, had been in a great degree nominal. After this his life passed smoothly. His reputation as a preacher stood very high, even in the metropolis, where the chapels were crowded to overflowing when his appearance was expected. A chapel was built for him near Bedford, and he often frequented another at a place called Bentick, where the pulpit which he used is still preserved with pious care. We cannot see in the sermons which Bunyan has left any strong marks of the genius which he really possessed, but the fashion of them is strange to the present day. His elocution must have been warm and fervent; and he himself even distrusted the degree of applause which he excited.

"One day when he had preached 'with peculiar warmth and enlargement,' some of his friends came to shake hands with him after the service, and observed to him 'what a sweet sermon' he had delivered. 'Ay!' he replied, 'you need not remind me of that; for the Devil told me of it before I was out of the pulpit.' This anecdote authenticates itself."

He died at no very late period of life, from the consequences of a labour of friendship. He had

undertaken a journey to prevail upon a friend not to disinherit his son; caught cold in returning to London, and was carried off by a fever. His epitaph is in these words:—

"Mr. John Bunyan, Author of the Pilgrim's Progress. ob. 12 Aug. 1688, æt. 60.

The Pilgrim's Progress now is finished,
And death has laid him in his earthly bed."

Of the first appearance of this celebrated parable, Mr Southey's diligence has preserved the following notices:—

"It is not known in what year the *Pilgrim's Progress* was first published, no copy of the first edition having as yet been discovered: the second is in the British Museum; it is "with additions," and its date is 1678: but as the book is known to have been written during Bunyan's imprisonment, which terminated in 1672, it was probably published before his release, or, at latest, immediately after it. The earliest with which Mr Major has been able to supply me, either by means of his own diligent inquiries, or the kindness of his friends, is that 'eighth e-di-ti-on' so humorously introduced by Gay, and printed,—not for Ni-cho-las Bod-ding-ton, but for Nathanael Ponder, at the Peacock in the Poultrey, near the Church, 1682; for whom also the ninth was published in 1684, and the tenth in 1685. All these no doubt were large impressions."

When the astonishing success of the *Pilgrim's Progress* had raised a swarm of imitators, the author himself, according to the frequent fashion of the world, was accused of plagiarism, to which he made an indignant reply, in what he considered as verses, prefixed to his *Holy War*.

"Some say the Pilgrim's Progress is not mine,
Insinuating as if I would shine
In name and fame by the worth of another,
Like some made rich by robbing of their brother;
Or that so fond I am of being Sire,
I'll father bastards; or, if need require,

I'll tell a lye in print, to get applause.—
I scorn it; John such dirt-heap never was,
Since God converted him. Let this suffice
To show why I my Pilgrim patronise.

" It came from mine own heart, so to my head,
And thence into my fingers trickled;
Then to my pen, from whence immediately
On paper I did dribble it daintily."—P. lxxxix.

Mr Southey has carefully examined this charge of supposed imitation, in which so much rests upon the very simplicity of the conception of the story, and has successfully shown that the tinker of Elstow could not have profited by one or two allegories in the French and Flemish languages—works which he could have had hardly a chance to meet with; which, if thrown in his way he could not have read; and, finally, which, if he had read them, could scarcely have supplied him with a single hint. Mr Southey, however, has not mentioned a work in English, of Bunyan's own time, and from which, certainly, the general notion of his allegory might have been taken. The work we allude to is now before us, entitled " The Parable of the Pilgrim, written to a friend, by Symon Patrick, D. D., Dean of Peterborough;"—the same learned person, well known by his theological writings, and successively bishop of Chichester and Ely. This worthy man's inscription is dated the 14th of December, 1672; and Mr Southey's widest conjecture will hardly allow an earlier date for Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, 1672 being the very year in which he was enlarged from prison. The language of Dr Patrick, in addressing his

friend, excludes the possibility of his having borrowed from John Bunyan's celebrated work. He apologizes for sending to his acquaintance one in the old fashioned dress of a pilgrim; and says he found among the works of a late writer, Baker's Sancta Sophia, a short discourse, under the name of a Parable of a Pilgrim; "which was so agreeable to the portion of fancy he was endowed with, that he presently thought that a work of this nature would be very grateful to his friend also." It appears that the Parable of a Pilgrim, so sketched by Dr Patrick, remained for some years in the possession of the private friend for whom it was drawn up, until, it being supposed by others that the work might be of general utility, it was at length published in 1678. Before that year the first edition of the *Pilgrim's Progress* had unquestionably made its appearance; but we equally acquit the Dean of Peterborough and the tinker of Elstow from copying a thought or idea from each other. If Dr Patrick had seen the *Pilgrim's Progress* he would, probably, in the pride of academic learning, have scorned to adopt it as a model; but, at all events, as a man of worth, he would never have denied the obligation if he had incurred one. John Bunyan, on his part, would in all likelihood have scorned, "with his very heels," to borrow any thing from a dean; and we are satisfied that he would have cut his hand off rather than written the introductory verses we have quoted, had not his Pilgrim been entirely his own.

Indeed, whoever will take the trouble of comparing the two works which, turning upon nearly the same allegory, and bearing very similar titles, came into existence at or about the very same time, will plainly see their total dissimilarity. Bunyan's is a close and continued allegory, in which the metaphorical fiction is sustained with all the minuteness of a real story. In Dr Patrick's the same plan is generally announced as arising from the earnest longing of a traveller, whom he calls Philotheus or Theophilus, whose desires are fixed on journeying to Jerusalem as a pilgrim. After much distressing uncertainty, caused by the contentions of pretended guides, who recommend different routes, he is at length recommended to a safe and intelligent one. Theophilus hastens to put himself under his pilotage, and the good man gives forth his instructions for the way, and in abundant detail, so that all the dangers of error and indifferent company may be securely avoided; but in all this, very little care is taken even to preserve the appearance of the allegory—in a word, you have, almost in plain terms, the moral and religious precepts necessary to be observed in the actual course of a moral and religious life. The pilgrim, indeed, sets out upon his journey, but it is only in order again to meet with his guide, who launches further into whole chapters of instructions, with scarcely a reply from the passive pupil. It is needless to point out the extreme difference between this strain of continued didactics, rather encumbered than enlivened by a starting metaphor, which, generally

quite lost sight of, the author recollects every now and then, as if by accident,—and the thoroughly life-like manner in which John Bunyan puts the adventures of his pilgrim before us. Two circumstances alone strike us as trenching somewhat on the manner of him of Elstow: the one is where the guide awakens some sluggish pilgrims, whom he finds sleeping by the way;[1] the other, is where their way is crossed by two horsemen, who insist upon assuming the office of guide. "The one is a pleasing talker, excellent company by reason of his pleasant humour, and of a carriage very pleasant and inviting. But they observed he had a sword by his side, and a pair of pistols before him, together with another instrument hanging at his belt, which was formed for pulling out of eyes."[2] The pilgrims suspected this well-armed cavalier to be one of that brood who will force others into their own path, and then put out their eyes in case they should forsake it. They have not got rid of their dangerous companion, by whom the Romish church is indicated, when they are accosted by a man of a quite different shape and humour, "more sad and melancholy, more rude, and of a heavier wit also, who crossed their way on the right hand." He also (representing, doubtless, the Presbyterians or Sectaries) pressed them with eagerness to accept his guidance, and did little less than menace them with total destruction if they should reject it. A dagger and a pocket-pistol, though less openly and

[1] Parable of the Pilgrim, Chapter xxx.
[2] *Ibidem*, Chapter xxxiv.

ostentatiously disposed than the arms of the first cavalier, seem ready for the same purposes; and he, therefore, is repulsed, as well as his neighbour. These are the only passages in which the church dignitary might be thought to have caught for a moment the spirit of the tinker of Bedford. Through the rest of his parable, which fills a well-sized quarto volume, the dean no doubt evinces considerable learning, but, compared to Bunyan, may rank with the dullest of all possible doctors; "a worthy neighbour, indeed, and a marvellous good bowler,—but for Alexander, you see how 'tis." Yet Dr Patrick had the applause of his own time. The first edition of his Parable appeared, as has been mentioned, in 1678; and the *sixth*, which now lies before us, is dated 1687.[1]

Mr Southey introduces the following just eulogium on our classic of the common people:—

"Bunyan was confident in his own powers of expression; he says,

> ——————— 'thine only way
> Before them all, is to say out thy say
> In thine own native language, which no man
> Now useth, nor with ease dissemble can.'

And he might well be confident in it. His is a homespun style, not a manufactured one: and what a difference is there between its homeliness, and the flippant vulgarity of the Roger L'Estrange and Tom Brown school! If it is not a well of English undefiled, to which the poet as well as the philologist must repair, if they would drink of the living waters, it is a clear stream of current English,—the vernacular speech of his age, sometimes indeed

[1] The Poet Laureat may, perhaps, like to hear that Dr Patrick introduces into his parable a very tolerable edition of that legend of the roasted fowls recalled to life by St James of Compostella, of which he himself has recently given us so lively and amusing a metrical version.

in its rusticity and coarseness, but always in its plainness and its strength. To this natural style Bunyan is in some degree beholden for his general popularity;—his language is every where level to the most ignorant reader, and to the meanest capacity: there is a homely reality about it; a nursery tale is not more intelligible, in its manner of narration, to a child. Another cause of his popularity is, that he taxes the imagination as little as the understanding. The vividness of his own, which, as his history shows, sometimes could not distinguish ideal impressions from actual ones, occasioned this. He saw the things of which he was writing as distinctly with his mind's eye as if they were indeed passing before him in a dream. And the reader perhaps sees them more satisfactorily to himself, because the outline only of the picture is presented to him, and the author having made no attempt to fill up the details, every reader supplies them according to the measure and scope of his own intellectual and imaginative powers."—Pp. lxxxviii. lxxxix.

It may be added, to these judicious remarks, that the most pleasing occupation of the fine arts being to awaken and excite the imagination, sketches in drawing, simple melodies in music, a bold, decisive, but light-touched strain of poetry or narrative in literary composition (like what is called in the green-room the *touch and go* method of acting), will always be more likely to gain extensive popularity than any more highly-wrought performance, which aspires to afford the mind no exercise save that of admiration, which pretends at once to rouse curiosity by the outline, and to satiate it by distinct, accurate circumstantiality of detail. To understand this, we need only remember having been the visiter of some celebrated scene of natural beauty, under the close guardianship of a pragmatical guide, who will let you find out nothing independent of him, and is so anxious that you should leave nothing unseen, that he makes you almost wish yourself

both deaf and blind, that you may neither hear his instructions nor profit by them. The true rule of grace in description and narrative—the *ne quid nimis*—is one which genius often neglects in its pride of luxuriance, and seldom without paying the penalty in popular opinion.

It is not, however, the words and manner of the *Pilgrim's Progress* alone which have raised that singular allegory to so high a rank among our general readers. The form and style of composition is safely referred to the highest authority—

> "WHO spake in parables, I dare not say,
> But sure *He* knew it was a pleasing way."

And, without dwelling on the precedent suggested by the poet, we may observe how often the allegory, or parable, has gained, without suspicion, those passes of the human heart which were vigilantly guarded against the direct force of truth by self-interest, prejudice, or pride. When the prophet approached the sinful monarch with the intention of reproving his murder and adultery, a direct annunciation of his purpose might have awakened the king to wrath, instead of that penitence to which it was the will of Heaven that he should be invited. But David listened unsuspectingly to the parable of the ewe-lamb; and it was not till the awful words—"*Thou art the man*"—were uttered, that he found the crime which he had so readily condemned was, in fact, the type of that which he had himself committed. In this respect, the comparing the parable with the real facts which it intimates, is like the practice of the artists to examine the reflec-

tion of their paintings in a mirror, that they may get clear of false lights and shadows, and judge of their compositions more accurately by seeing them presented under a change of light and circumstances. But, besides the moral uses of this species of composition, it has much in it to exercise those faculties of the human mind which it is most agreeable to keep in motion. Our judgment is engaged in weighing and measuring the points of similarity between the reality and the metaphor as these evolve themselves, and fancy is no less amused by the unexpected, surprising, and, we may even say, the witty turns of thought, through means of which associations are produced between things which, in themselves, seemed diametrically opposed and irreconcilable, but which the allegorist has contrived should nevertheless illustrate each other. In some cases, the parable possesses the interest of the riddle itself; the examination and solution of which are so interesting to the human intellect, that the history and religious doctrines of ancient nations were often at once preserved and disguised in the form of such ænigmata.

In a style of composition, rendered thus venerable by its antiquity, and still more so by the purposes to which it has been applied, John Bunyan, however uneducated, was a distinguished master. For our part, we are inclined to allow him, in the simplicity of his story, and his very shrewdness, and, if the reader pleases, homely bluntness of style, a superiority over the great poet to whom he has been compared by D'Israeli,—which, considering

both writers as allegorists, may, in some respect, counterbalance the advantages of a mind fraught with education, a head full of poetic flight and grace —in a word, the various, the unutterable distinction between the friend of Sidney and of Raleigh, the fascinating poet of fairy land, and our obscure tinker of Elstow, the self-erected holder-forth to the Anabaptists of Bedford. Either has told a tale expressive of the progress of religion and morality —Spenser's under the guise of a romance of chivalry, while that of Bunyan recalls the outline of a popular fairy tale, with its machinery of giants, dwarfs, and enchanters. So far they resemble each other; and if the later writer must allow the earlier the advantage of a richer imagination, and a taste incalculably more cultivated, the uneducated man of the people may, in return, claim over Spenser the superiority due to a more simple and better concocted plan, from which he has suffered no temptation to lead him astray.

This will appear more evident, if we observe that Spenser (the first book, perhaps, excepted, where he has traced, in the adventures of the Redcross Knight, with considerable accuracy, the history and changes of the Christian world) has, in other cantos, suffered his story to lead him astray from his moral, and engages his knights, by whom we are to understand the abstract virtues, in tilts and tournaments, not to be easily reconciled with the explanation of the allegory. What are we to understand by Britomart overthrowing Arthegal, if we regard the lady as the representative of chas-

tity, and the knight as that of justice? Many discrepancies of the same kind could be pointed out; and probably some readers may agree with us in thinking that those passages of the poem are sometimes not the least amusing in which Spenser forgets his allegory, and becomes a mere romancer like Ariosto. But, besides the allegory by which Spenser designs to present the pageant of the moral virtues, assigning a knight as the representative of each virtue, by whom the opposing appetites should be curbed and overthrown; he has embodied in his story a second and political allegory. Not only is Gloriana the imaginary concentration of the glory sought by every true knight—she is Queen Elizabeth too; not only does King Arthur present the spirit and essence of pure chivalry—he is likewise Spenser's (unworthy) patron, the Earl of Leicester; and many of the adventures which describe the struggles of virtue and vice also shadow forth anecdotes and intrignes of the English court, invisible to those, as Spenser himself insinuates,

"Who n'ote without a hound fine footing trace."

This complication of meanings may render the Faëry Queene doubly valuable to the antiquary who can explore its secret sense; but it must always be an objection to Spenser's plan, with the common reader, that the attempt at too much ingenuity has marred the simplicity of his allegory, and deprived it, in a great degree, of consistency and coherence.

In this essential point the poet is greatly inferior to the prose allegorist: indeed they write with very different notions of the importance of their subject. Spenser desired, no doubt, to aid the cause of virtue, but it was in the character of a cold and unimpassioned moralist, easily seduced from that part of his task by the desire to pay a compliment to some courtier, or some lady, or the mere wish to give a wider scope to his own fancy. Bunyan, on the contrary, in recommending his own religious opinions to the readers of his romance, was impressed throughout with the sense of the sacred importance of the task for which he had lived through poverty and captivity, and was, we doubt not, prepared to die. To gain the favour of Charles and all his court he would not, we are confident, have guided Christian one foot off the narrow and strait path; and his excellence above Spenser's is, that his powerful thoughts were all directed to one solemn end, and his fertile imagination taxed for every thing which could give life and vivacity to his narrative, vigour and consistency to the spirit of his allegory. His every thought is turned to strengthen and confirm the reasoning on which his argument depends; and nothing is more admirable than the acuteness of that fancy with which, still keeping an eye on his principal purpose, Bunyan contrives to extract, from the slightest particulars, the means of extending and fortifying its impression.

Let us, for example, compare Bunyan to a good man, but common-place writer, the author of the

rival Parable. Dr Patrick's Pilgrim, in the thirty-second chapter, falls in with "a company of select friends, who are met at a frugal, but handsome dinner." This incident suggests to the worthy guide the praises of sociable mirth, restrained by temperance and sobriety. When Bunyan, on the contrary, has occasion to mention an entertainment, instead of the cold generality of the Dean of Peterborough, every dish which he places on the table is in itself a scriptural parable; and the precise nature of the refreshment, while described with the vivacious seeming accuracy of Le Sagé or Cervantes, is found, on referring to the texts indicated, to have an explicit connexion with some striking particular of Holy Writ. At the house of Gaius, for example, not only the wine red as blood, the milk "well crumbed," the apples and nuts, but the carving of the table, and ordering of the salt and trenchers, have each their especial and typical meaning; and while the reader only hears of the entertainment of Dr Patrick, he seems to feed at that of John Bunyan, and sit a guest to profit by the conversation.[1] Unquestionably this desire to keep so close to, and hunt down, as it were, the metaphor, may sometimes be held trifling and tedious: but it is a far better fault than that neglect of his machinery which is most likely to enfeeble the texture of a less gifted allegorist.

The parable of the Pilgrim's Progress is, of course, tinged with the tenets of the author, who might be called a Calvinist in every respect, save

[1] Pilgrim's Progress, p. 344.

his aversion to the institution of a regular and ordained clergy. To these tenets he has, of course, adapted the Pilgrimage of Christian, in the incidents which occur, and opinions which are expressed. The final condemnation of Ignorance, for instance, who is consigned to the infernal regions when asking admittance to the celestial city, because unable to produce a certificate of his calling, conveys the same severe doctrine of fatalism which had wellnigh overturned the reason of Bunyan himself. But the work is not of a controversial character,—it might be perused without offence by sober-minded Christians of all persuasions; and we all know that it is read universally, and has been translated into many languages. It, indeed, appears from many passages in Bunyan's writings, that there was nothing which he dreaded so much as divisions amongst sincere Christians.

"Since you would know (he says) by what name I would be distinguished from others, I tell you, I would be, and hope I am, a *Christian*; and choose if God should count me worthy, to be called *a Christian, a Believer*, or other such name which is approved by the Holy Ghost. And as for those factious titles of Anabaptists, Independents, Presbyterians, or the like, I conclude that they come neither from Jerusalem nor from Antioch, but rather from Hell and Babylon; for they naturally tend to divisions. You may know them by their fruits."—P. lxxvii.

Mr Southey, observing with what general accuracy this apostle of the people writes the English language, notwithstanding all the disadvantages under which his youth must have been passed, pauses to notice one gross and repeated error. "The vulgarism alluded to," says the laureate, "consists in the almost uniform use of *a* for *have*,—

never marked as a contraction, *e.g.* might *a* made me take heed,—like to *a* been smothered." Under favour, however, this is a sin against orthography rather than grammar: the tinker of Elstow only spelt according to the pronunciation of the verb *to have*, then common in his class; and the same form appears a hundred times in Shakspeare. We must not here omit to mention the skill with which Mr Southey has restored much of Bunyan's masculine and idiomatic English, which had been gradually dropped out of successive impressions by careless, or unfaithful, or, what is as bad, conceited correctors of the press.

The speedy popularity of the Pilgrim's Progress had the natural effect of inducing Bunyan again to indulge the vein of allegory in which his warm imagination and clear and forcible expression had procured him such success. Under this impression, he produced the second part of his Pilgrim's Progress; and well says Mr Southey, that none but those who have acquired the ill habit of always reading critically, can feel it as a clog upon the first. The first part is, indeed, one of those delightfully simple and captivating tales which, as soon as finished, we are not unwilling to begin again. Even the adult becomes himself like the child who cannot be satisfied with the repetition of a favourite tale, but harasses the story-telling aunt or nurse, to know more of the incidents and characters. In this respect Bunyan has contrived a contrast, which, far from exhausting his subject, opens new sources of attraction, and adds to the original impression. The Pilgrimage of Christi-

ana, her friend Mercy, and her children, commands sympathy at least as powerful as that of Christian himself, and it materially adds to the interest which we have taken in the progress of the husband, to trace the effects produced by similar events in the case of women and children.

"There is a pleasure," says the learned editor, "in travelling with another companion the same ground—a pleasure of reminiscence, neither inferior in kind or degree to that which is derived from a first impression. The characters are judiciously marked: that of Mercy, particularly, is sketched with an admirable grace and simplicity; nor do we read of any with equal interest, excepting that of Ruth in Scripture, so beautifully, on all occasions, does the Mercy of John Bunyan unfold modest humility regarding her own merits, and tender veneration for the matron Christiana."

The distinctions between the first and second part of the *Pilgrim's Progress* are such as circumstances render appropriate; and as John Bunyan's strong mother wit enabled him to seize upon correctly. Christian, for example, a man, and a bold one, is represented as enduring his fatigues, trials, and combats, by his own stout courage, under the blessing of Heaven: but to express that species of inspired heroism by which women are supported in the path of duty, notwithstanding the natural feebleness and timidity of their nature, Christiana and Mercy obtain from the Interpreter their guide, called Great-heart, by whose strength and valour their lack of both is supplied, and the dangers and distresses of the way repelled and overcome.

The author hints, at the end of the second part, as if "it might be his lot to go this way again;"

nor was his mind that light species of soil which could be exhausted by two crops. But he left to another and very inferior hand the task of composing a third part, containing the adventures of one Tender Conscience, far unworthy to be bound up, as it sometimes is, with John Bunyan's matchless parable.

Bunyan, however, added another work to those by which he was already distinguished:—this was "The Holy War made by King Shaddai upon Diabolus for the regaining of the metropolis of the World; or, the losing and retaking of Mansoul." In this allegory the fall of man is figured under the type of a flourishing city, reduced under the tyranny of the giant Diabolus, or the Prince of Evil; and recovered, after a tedious siege, by Immanuel, the son of Shaddai, its founder and true lord. A late reverend editor of this work has said that "Mr Bunyan was better qualified than most ministers to treat this subject with propriety, having been himself a soldier, and knowing by experience the evils and hardships of war. He displays throughout his accurate knowledge of the Bible and its distinguished doctrines; his deep acquaintance with the human heart, and its desperate wickedness; his knowledge of the devices of Satan, and of the prejudices of the carnal mind against the Gospel."[1] To this panegyric we entirely subscribe, except that we do not see that Bunyan has made much use of any military know-

[1] Burder's Edition of the Holy War, 1824.

ledge which he might possess. Mansoul is attacked by mounts, slings, and battering-rams—weapons out of date at the time of our civil wars; and we can only trace the author's soldierly experience in his referring to the points of war then performed, as "Boot and saddle," "Horse and away," and so forth. Indeed, the greatest risk which he seems to have incurred, in his military capacity, was one somewhat resembling the escape of Sir Roger de Coverley's ancestor at Worcester, who was saved from the slaughter of that action by having been absent from the field. In like manner, Bunyan, having been appointed to attend at the siege of Leicester, a fellow-soldier volunteered to perform the service in his stead, and was there slain. Upon the whole, though the *Holy War* be a work of great ingenuity, it wants the simplicity and intense interest which are the charm of the *Pilgrim's Progress.*

Mr Barder (the editor last mentioned) remarks, that Bunyan maintains his allegory by assigning to his characters such significant names as introduce them with singular propriety. This was a qualification in great request among the authors of fictitious composition, whether narrative or dramatic, in Charles the Second's days; and, no doubt, many artificers of plays and novels in our own time would be inclined to join Falstaff, though rather in a different sense, in his earnest wish that he knew where "a commodity of good names was to be purchased." A happily christened list of dramatis personæ is a key-note for the easy introduction of

the story, and saves the author the trouble of tagging his characters with descriptions, always somewhat awkward, of person and disposition. In some respects it answers the purpose which Texier was wont to achieve in another way. Those who remember, like ourselves, that distinguished reader of the French comedians (and such treats are not easily forgotten), cannot but recollect, that on first reading over the list of characters, with the author's short description annexed, M. Texier assumed in each the voice and manner in which he intended to read the part; and so wonderful was his discrimination, that the most obtuse hearer had never afterwards the least difficulty in ascertaining who was speaking. A happy selection of names has somewhat the same effect in placing the characters who bear them before us in their original concoction.

It is no doubt true, that this may be coarsely and inartificially attempted, so as at once to destroy the reality of the tale. When the thrice noble, illustrious, and excellent princess, as the titlepage calls her, the Duchess of Newcastle, produces on the stage such personages as Sir Mercury Poet, the Lady Fancy, Sir William Sage, Lady Virtue, and Mimic—the jest is as flat and dull as that of Snug, the joiner, when he acts the lion bare-faced. On the other hand, some authors produce names, either real or approaching to reality, which nevertheless possess that resemblance to the character which has all the effect of wit, and, by its happy coincidence with the narrative, greatly enhances the pleasure of the reader. Thus, in the excellent novel of

*Marriage*, an elderly dowager, who deals in telling her neighbours disagreeable truths, which she calls "speaking her mind," is very happily Mrs *Downe Wright*. Anstey, also, whose genius in this line was particular, gives us a list of company, of each of whom we form a distinct and individual idea from the name alone:—

> "With old Lady Towzer,
> And Marshal Carouser,
> Came the great Hanoverian Baron Panmouzer."

We might also mention the Widow Quicklachit, with "little Bob Jerome, old Chrysostom's son," or the parties in the country-dance, where the contrasts of stature, complexion, and age, are conveyed by little more than the names:—

> "Miss Curd had a partner as black as Omiah;
> Kitty Tit shook her heels with old Doctor Goliah;
> While little John Trot, like a pony just nicked,
> With long Dolly Louderhead scampered and kicked."

Other, and those very distinguished authors, have not ventured to push this resemblance between the names and characters of their personages so far. An ominous and unpleasing epithet, a jarring and boding collocation of consonants, form the names of their villains; as, for instance, who could expect any thing good from a Blifil? The heroes and heroines, on the contrary, rejoice in the softest, and, at the same time, the most aristocratic names, —such as aspirants to the actual stage select for a first appearance.

Without permitting our remarks on this head to lead us further astray from the subject, we shall

only observe, that Bunyan was indifferent to other points so his names were expressive. Mr Penny-wise-pound-foolish is not a happy name, and still less Mr Wise-in-the-hundred-and-fool-in-the-shire, but they serve to keep the allegory before the reader's mind. On the other hand, Mrs Bat's-eyes, Mr Ready-to-halt, and Much-afraid, his daughter, Fair-speech, By-ends, and the rest, without being very improbable, have the same advantage of maintaining the reader's attention to the author's meaning. As an apology for the length and singular composition of such names as Valiant-for-the-truth, Dare-not-lie, and the like, the reader must remember, that it was the custom of that puritanical age to impose texts and religious sentences, for examples of which we may refer to the rolls of Praise-God-Barebones' parliament. [1]

In these observations we have never touched upon Bunyan's poetry—an omission for which the good man, had he been alive, would scarce have thanked us, for he had a considerable notion of his gift that way, though his present editor is of opinion that John modelled his verses upon those of Robert Wisdom, a degree more prosaic than the effusions of Sternhold and Hopkins. His mechanical education prevented his access to better models: and of verse he knew nothing but the necessity of tagging syllables of a certain amount with very slovenly rhymes. Mr Southey has revived some specimens

[1] That worthy's own brother may perhaps furnish not the worst specimen. He wrote himself, "If-the-Lord-help-me-not I-am-damned;" but, for shortness, was commonly called "Damned Barebones."

of verses written by Bunyan (with great self-approbation, doubtless) upon the leaves of Fox's *Book of Martyrs*. These "Tincker's tetrastics," as Southey calls them, may rank, in idea and expression, with the basest doggrel. But his later poetry excels this humble model; he had learned to soar beyond Robert Wisdom, when he was able to express himself thus in recommendation of the Pilgrim's Progress.

> "Wouldst thou divert thyself from melancholy?
> Wouldst thou be pleasant, yet be far from folly?
> Wouldst thou read riddles and their explanation?
> Or else be drowned in thy contemplation?
> Dost thou love picking meat? Or wouldst thou see
> A man i' the clouds, and hear him speak to thee?
> Wouldst thou be in a dream, and yet not sleep?
> Or wouldst thou in a moment laugh and weep?
> Wouldst thou loose thyself and catch no harm,
> And find thyself again without a charm?
> Wouldst read thyself, and read thou know'st not what?
> And yet know whether thou art blest or not,
> By reading the same lines? O then come hither!
> And lay my book, thy head, and heart together."—P. 9.

In these lines, though carelessly and roughly formed, there are both ideas and powers of expression. Another little sonnet, taken in connexion with the scene of repose, in the prose narrative, has a simplicity which approaches elegance. It occurs on the entrance of the Pilgrim into the valley of Humiliation.

> "Now, as they were going along and talking, they espied a boy feeding his father's sheep. The boy was in very mean clothes, but of a fresh and well-favoured countenance, and as he sat by himself, he sung. 'Hark,' said Mr Great-heart, 'to what the shepherd's boy saith!' So they harkened, and he said,—

[illegible]

[illegible] Mr Southey, it might [illegible] favourite of the [illegible] received among the [illegible] contains many pas- [illegible] point of taste (as, indeed, [illegible] of the author, was [illegible] should not be sur- [illegible] interrupted than its [illegible] corrupt a precious [illegible] taste, especially if [illegible] to lively ridicule, [illegible] like the present, [illegible] and whimsicality

In whatever shape presented, John Bunyan's parable must be dear to many, as to us, from the recollection that in youth they were endued with permission to peruse it at times when all studies of a nature merely entertaining were prohibited. We remember with interest the passages where, in our childhood, we stumbled betwixt the literal story and metaphorical explanation; and can even recall to mind a more simple and early period, when Grim and Slaygood, and even he

"Whose castle's Doubting, and whose name's Despair,"

were to us as literal Anakim as those destroyed by Giant-killing Jack. Those who can recollect the early developement of their own ideas on such subjects, will many of them at the same time remember the reading of this work as the first task which gave exercise to the mind, before taste, grown too fastidious for enjoyment, taught them to be more disgusted with a single error than delighted with a hundred beauties.

# ARTICLE IV.

## GODWIN'S FLEETWOOD.

[*Fleetwood: or the New Man of Feeling.* *By* WILLIAM GODWIN. *Edinburgh Review*, 1805.]

WHOEVER has read *Caleb Williams*, and there are probably few, even amongst those addicted to graver studies, who have not perused that celebrated work, must necessarily be eager to see another romance from the hand of the same author. Of this anxiety we acknowledge we partook to a considerable degree; not, indeed, that we had any great pleasure in recollecting the conduct and nature of the story; for murders, and chains, and dungeons, and indictments, trial and execution, have no particular charms for us, either in fiction or in reality. Neither is it on account of the moral proposed by the author, which, in direct opposition to that of the worthy chaplain of Newgate, seems to be, not that a man guilty of theft or murder is in some danger of being hanged, but that, by a strange concurrence of circumstances, he may be

regularly conducted to the gallows for theft or murder which he has never committed. There is nothing instructive or consolatory in this proposition when taken by itself; and if intended as a reproach upon the laws of this country, it is equally applicable to all human judicatures, whose judges can only decide according to evidence, since the Supreme Being has reserved to himself the prerogative of searching the heart and of trying the reins. But, although the story of *Caleb Williams* be unpleasing, and the moral sufficiently mischievous, we acknowledge we have met with few novels which excited a more powerful interest. Several scenes are painted with the savage force of Salvator Rosa; and, while the author pauses to reason upon the feelings and motives of the actors, our sense of the fallacy of his arguments, of the improbability of his facts, and of the frequent inconsistency of his characters, is lost in the solemnity and suspense with which we expect the evolution of the tale of mystery. After *Caleb Williams* it would be injustice to Mr Godwin to mention *St Leon*, where the marvellous is employed too frequently to excite wonder, and the terrible is introduced till we have become familiar with terror. The description of Bethlem Gabor, however, recalled to our mind the author of *Caleb Williams;* nor, upon the whole, was the romance such as could have been written by quite an ordinary pen. These preliminary remarks are not entirely misplaced, as will appear from the following quotation from the preface to *Fleetwood.*

"One caution I have particularly sought to exercise: 'not to repeat myself.' *Caleb Williams* was a story of very surprising and uncommon events, but which were supposed to be entirely within the laws and established course of nature, as she operates in the planet we inhabit. The story of *St Leon* is of the miraculous class; and its design, to 'mix human feelings and passions with incredible situations, and thus render them impressive and interesting.'

"Some of these fastidious readers—they may be classed among the best friends an author has, if their admonitions are judiciously considered—who are willing to discover those faults which do not offer themselves to every eye, have remarked, that both these tales are in a vicious style of writing; that Horace has long ago decided, that the story we cannot believe, we are, by all the laws of criticism, called upon to hate; and that even the adventures of the honest secretary, who was first heard of ten years ago, are so much out of the usual road, that not one reader in a million can ever fear they will happen to himself."—Vol. i. *Pref.*

Moved by these considerations, Mr Godwin has chosen a tale of domestic life, consisting of such incidents as usually occur in the present state of society, diversified only by ingenuity of selection, and novelty of detail. How far he has been successful, will best appear from a sketch of the story.

Fleetwood, the only son of a gentleman who has retired from mercantile concerns to the enjoyment of a liberal fortune, is born and educated among the mountains of Wales. He has no companions saving his father, an infirm though very respectable old gentleman, and his tutor, who was *not* a clergyman; notwithstanding which, he studied Plato without understanding him, and indemnified himself by writing sonnets which could be understood by nobody. Fleetwood being of course a passionate admirer of the beauties of nature, preferred scram-

bling over the heights of Cader Idris, adoring the rising, and admiring the setting sun, to perusing the pages of Plato, and the poetry of his tutor. In one of these rambles, somewhat to the reader's relief, whose patience is rather tired by an unfruitful description of precipices, cascades, and the immeasurable ocean in the background, he at length meets with an adventure. A lamb, a favourite lamb, falls into a lake; the shepherd plunges in after the lamb; an aged peasant, his father, is about to plunge in after the shepherd, when Fleetwood, as might have been expected, anticipates his affectionate intentions. After remaining a reasonable time in the water, the shepherd holding the lamb, and Fleetwood supporting the shepherd, they are all three fished up by an interesting young damsel who approaches in a boat, and proves to be (according to good old usage) the mistress of William the shepherd, and the proprietor of the half-drowned favourite. This adventure leads to nothing, except that, in the conclusion of the work, the interesting young woman unexpectedly pops back upon us in the very useful, though not very romantic character of an old sick-nurse; deserving no less, in her advanced age, the praises of the Institution for Relief of the Destitute Sick, than in her youth she had merited a premium from the Humane Society. The worthy tutor, in like manner, vanishes entirely from our view, retiring to an obscure lodging in a narrow street, to finish his book of sonnets, and his commentary on Plato. His pupil is now introduced to the knowledge of mankind at the Univer-

sity. Here he discovers no aversion to distinguish himself among the dissipated sons of fortune, and soon becomes something very different from the climber of mountains and diver into lakes. But he acquits himself of all share in a *quizzing* scene, played off upon a *fresh-man* called Withers, who had written a tragedy on a very interesting subject—the cleansing of the Augean stable. This piece he is prevailed upon to recite to certain arch wags, who receive it with rapture, fill the author drunk, and bear him home, crowned with parsley, and dropping with wine, in classical triumph. They have afterwards the address to pass a wooden figure upon him for the master of his college, who, after a rebuke pronounced in character by one of the quizzers, who chanced to be a ventriloquist, proceeds, by some unknown mechanism, to inflict upon Withers the academical discipline under which Milton is said to have smarted of yore; but, far from imitating the submission of his sublime prototype, the modern bard kicked and cuffed in stout opposition, till he discovered the impassible character of his antagonist. The joke ends by Withers going mad, and the ingenious authors of his distress being rusticated. We presume the ventriloquist found a refuge with Fitz-James, and the mechanist with Merlin or Maillardet. What connexion this facetious tale has with Fleetwood, or his history, does not appear; but we reverence the established privilege of an Oxonian to prose about all that happened when he was at Christ-Church.

We now accompany Fleetwood on his travels. Paris was his first stage, where he had the strange and uncommon misfortune to be jilted by two mistresses. The first was a certain marchioness, whose mind "resembled an eel," and who delighted in the bold, the intrepid, and the masculine. Her lover was greeted with an impudent Amazonian stare, a smack of the whip, a slap on the back, and a loud and unexpected accent that made the hearer start again. Upon discovering the infidelity of this gentle lady, Fleetwood, being in Paris, followed the example of the Parisians, but not without experiencing certain twinges of pain, and revolutions of astonishment, to which we believe these good people, on such occasions, are usually strangers. In a word, he took another mistress. The Countess de B. had every gentle amiability under heaven, and only one fault, which might be expressed in one word if we chose it, but we prefer the more prolix explanation of the author.

"Yet the passion of the countess was rather an abstract propensity, than the preference of an individual. A given quantity of personal merit and accomplished manners was sure to charm her. A fresh and agreeable complexion, a sparkling eye, a well-turned leg, a grace in dancing or in performing the manœuvres of gallantry, were claims that the Countess de B. was never known to resist."—Vol. i. p. 152.

Upon discovery of this frailty, our hero's patience forsook him; and he raved, fumed, and agonized, till ours likewise was on the verge of departure. In this paroxysm, his taste for the mountain and the desert returned upon him like a frenzy; and as there were none nearer than the Alps, to the Alps he flies incontinently on the wings of despair.

He repairs to the mansion of a venerable old Swiss gentleman, a friend of his father, delightfully situated in the valley of Ursereen, in a wood of tall and venerable trees; a very extraordinary and fortunate circumstance for the possessor, as we will venture to say that it is the only wood that ever grew in that celebrated valley, which is the highest inhabited ground in the Alps. The host of Fleetwood carries him to a pleasure party on the lake of Uri, and chooses that time and place to acquaint him, that while he was living jollily at Paris, his father had taken the opportunity of dying quietly in Merionethshire.[1] The effect of this intelligence upon Fleetwood is inexpressibly striking. He ate no breakfast the next morning; and it was not till the arrival of dinner, that "hunger at length subdued the obstinacy of his grief." Ruffigny, his host, now joins him; and after a reasonable allowance of sympathy and consolation, entertains him with the history of his connexion with his father.

Ruffigny, left in infancy to the guardianship of a wicked uncle who thirsted after his inheritance, had been trepanned to Lyons, and bound apprentice to a silk-weaver, or rather employed in the more laborious part of his drudgery. His feelings, on being gradually subjected to this monotonous and degrading labour, are very well described, as also the enthusiastic resolution which he forms, of

[1] By the way, we greatly question the locality here pitched on. We know of no such lake as the lake of Uri; but we suppose the lake of Lucerne, a lake of the four cantons, was the scene of this affecting discovery. But Mr Godwin is not much at home in Switzerland.

throwing himself at the feet of the King of France, whom the boy had pictured to himself like the Henry and the Francis, the heroes of the legendary tales of his country. His escape, his journey, his disappointment, have all the same style of merit; and it is in such painting, where the subject is actuated by some wild, uncommon, or unnatural strain of passion and feeling, that we conceive Mr Godwin's peculiar talent to lie. At Paris, the deserted Ruffigny is patronised by Fleetwood, the grandfather of our hero; and his future connexion with that family is marked with reciprocal acts of that romantic generosity, which is so common in novels, and so very rare in real life.

The main narrative is now resumed. Ruffigny accompanies Fleetwood on his return to England, where he finds in his paternal dwelling "an empty mansion and a tenanted grave." Notwithstanding his grief for his father's death, he is on the point of forming a connexion with a bewitching Mrs Comorin (*quære* Cormorant?) who had lately cohabited with Lord Mandeville, but, having quarrelled with her admirer, had a heart and person vacant for the first suitable offer. This naughty affair is interrupted by the precipitate retreat of Ruffigny, who, not choosing to be present where such matters were going forward, was in full march towards Switzerland, when he is recalled, by Fleetwood's consent, to sacrifice his young mistress to his old friend. After this period, the story flags insufferably. Fleetwood, like King Solomon of yore, tries the various resources of travelling, so-

ciety, literature, politics, and farming, and, with him, pronounces them all vanity and vexation of spirit. In this vain pursuit, he becomes a confirmed old bachelor; and the interest of the story, contrary to that of every other novel, commences when he exchanges this unprofitable state for that of matrimony.

This grand step he is induced to take by the disinterested arguments of Mr Macneil, a shrewd Scotchman, whom he meets on the lakes of Cumberland, and who at that very moment had four unmarried daughters upon his hands. The accomplishments of these damsels were rather overshadowed by some peculiarities in the history of their mother. This lady, when very young, had, while in Italy, married her music-master, who gave her no small reason to repent her choice. Macneil delivered her from the tyranny of this ungrateful musician, who had immured her in a ruinous castle, his hereditary mansion! That she gave her deliverer her heart was natural enough, but she also bestowed upon him her hand, to which the deserted minstrel had an unalienable claim. The ladies on the lakes of Cumberland, judging that two husbands was an unreasonable allowance, declined intercourse with the fair monopolist. Macneil was therefore about to return to Italy, where he had vested his whole fortune in the hands of a banker of Genoa; but, upon the fervent suit of Fleetwood, he agreed that his youngest daughter, Mary, should remain in England. He himself, with his wife and three eldest daughters, proceed on their voyage, leaving

Mary a visitor in a family at London. The vessel in which the Macneils had embarked is wrecked in the bay of Biscay, and all that unfortunate family perish in the waves. This disastrous intelligence is nearly a death-blow to poor Mary, the sole survivor, and to whom her mother and sisters had hitherto been all in all. The Genoese banker, finding that no vouchers of his being the depositary of Macneil's fortune had escaped from the wreck, refuses to give any account of it; and our interest in Mary's distress and desolation is unnecessarily interrupted by a minute detail of the steps by which Fleetwood in vain attempted to bring a banker to confess the receipt of a sum which could not otherwise be proved against him. It is even hinted, as a reason for which he pressed his marriage with the deserted orphan, that he at length became afraid that, since the question rested on a trial of character betwixt him and the Genoese, he might himself be suspected of having embezzled her fortune. This is one of the instances of coarseness and bad taste with which Mr Godwin sometimes degrades his characters. (In *Caleb Williams*, a gentleman passionately addicted to the manners of ancient chivalry, becomes a midnight assassin, when an honourable revenge was in his power; and in *Fleetwood*, a man of feeling, in soliciting an union pressed upon him by love, by honour, and by every feeling of humanity, is influenced by a motive of remote and despicable calculation, which we will venture to say never entered the head of an honest man in similar circumstances.)

Fleetwood and Mary are at length married; and from this marriage, as we have already noticed, commences any interest which we take in the history of the former. Indeed it can hardly be called a history, which has neither incident nor novelty of remark to recommend it, consisting entirely of idle and inflated declamations upon the most common occurrences of human life. The union of Mary and Fleetwood, considering the youth and variable spirits of the former, and the age and confirmed prejudices of the latter, promises a more interesting subject of speculation. Upon their arrival in Wales, the reader is soon made sensible that a man of feeling, upon Mr Godwin's system, is the most selfish animal in the universe. We appeal to our fair readers if this is not a just conclusion, from the following account of the matrimonial disputes of this ill-matched pair. Upon visiting the family mansion in Merionethshire, the lady gives the first cause of disgust, by rather hastily appropriating to her own purposes a closet which had been the favourite retirement of her husband. Without having the force of mind to tell Mary that this unlucky *boudoir* was consecrated to his own studies, Fleetwood nourishes a kind of secret malice against his wife for her unlucky selection of this retreat, hallowed as it had been to his own exclusive use. This is hardly over when a new offence is given. While our hero is reading to his young bride his favourite play, "A Wife for a Month" (in fact he did not retain his own for many more), Mary, either from natural levity, or because the ardent

declamations of the amorous Valerio excited comparisons unfavourable to Fleetwood, chooses to desert the rehearsal in order to botanize with a young peasant on the cliffs of Cader Idris. Now, there is nothing unnatural in this incident, and we believe domestic felicity is frequently interrupted by such differences of taste, and neglect of the feelings of each other; but we doubt whether our readers will not think the tragic declamations of Fleetwood infinitely too high-toned for the nature of his misfortunes. It is not very pleasant to lose possession of a favourite closet, and it is teazing enough to be deserted while reciting a favourite author; but, surely, the *sesquipedalia verba* of Fleetwood attach to these grievances a degree of consequence in which none can sympathize, and which to most will be the subject of ridicule. Another cause of dispute, of a still more important as well as of a more common kind, arises betwixt Fleetwood and Mary. This concerns the share to be taken in the visits and public society of the country in which they lived. Mary's fondness for these amusements excites the displeasure, and at length the jealousy of her husband; and he expresses both, with very great indulgence to his own feelings, and very little to those of his lady. In these circumstances her health began to give way, under the perpetual irritation occasioned by the deportment of her moody partner; and her mind settled in mournful recollection upon the contemplation of the loss she had sustained by the shipwreck of her sisters and parents. We transcribe the following account of the progress

of her malady as one of the few interesting passages in the book.

" One further circumstance occurred in the progress of Mary's distemper. She would steal from her bed in the middle of the night, when no one perceived it, and make her escape out of the house. The first time this accident occurred I was exceedingly alarmed. I awoke, and found that the beloved of my soul was gone. I sought her in her closet, in the parlour, and in the library; I then called up the servants. The night was dark and tempestuous; the wind blew a hollow blast; and the surges roared and stormed as they buffeted against the hurricane. A sort of sleet blew sharp in our faces when we opened the door of the house. I went myself in one direction, and despatched the servants in others, to call and search for their mistress. After two hours she was brought back by one of my people, who, having sought in vain at a distance, had discovered her, on his return, not far from the house. Her hair was dishevelled; her countenance as white as death; her limbs cold; she was languid and speechless. We got her as quickly as we could to bed.

" This happened a second time. At length I extorted her secret from her—she had been to the beach of the sea to seek the bodies of her parents. On the sea-shore she seemed to converse with their spirits. She owned, she had been tempted to plunge herself into the waves to meet them. She heard their voices speaking to her in the hollow wind, and saw their faces riding on the top of the waves by the light of the moon, as it peeped precariously through the storm. They called to her, and bid her come along, and chid her for her delay. The words at first sounded softly, so that it seemed difficult to hear them, but afterward changed to the most dolorous and piercing shrieks. In the last instance, a figure had approached her, and, seizing her garment, detained her just as she was going to launch herself into the element. The servants talked something of a gentleman, who had quitted Mary precisely as they came up to conduct her home.

" She confessed, that whenever the equinoctial wind sounded in her ears, it gave a sudden turn to her blood and spirits. As she listened alone to the roaring of the ocean, her parents and her sisters immediately stood before her. More than once she had been awaked at midnight by the well-known sound; and, looking out of bed, she saw their bodies strewed on the floor, distended

with the element that filled them, and their features distorted with death. This spectacle she could not endure. She had crept silently out of bed, and, drawing a few clothes about her, had found her way into the air. She felt nothing of the storm; and, led on by an impulse she could not resist, had turned her steps towards the sea."—Vol. iii. p. 79–82.

This kind of partial derangement of the intellect is very strikingly described. It has not, however, the merit of novelty, as the same idea occurs in the licentious novel of *Faublas*, written by the famous Louvet. At the conclusion of that work the hero tells us, that still when the south wind whistled, or the thunder rolled, his disordered imagination presented to him the scene which had passed at the death of his mistress; he again heard the sound of the midnight bell, and the voice of the sentinel who pointed to the river, and coldly said, "She is there." We quote from memory, a work which, for many reasons, we would not choose to read again; but we think that this is the import of the passage, and it considerably resembles that in *Fleetwood*, though the idea in the latter is more prolonged and brought out.

Mary is removed to Bath, where she recovers from her depression of spirits, to fall into the opposite extreme of giddy and unceasing hilarity. At this time Fleetwood is joined by two cousins, both under his patronage, and who come to reside in his family. They are half brothers. Kenrick is an open, candid, thoughtless, young soldier; Gifford a deep hypocritical villain. These two brothers, like the black and white genius in Voltaire's tale,

attend Fleetwood through the rest of the book, and are the causes of the good and bad fortune which befall him. Gifford contrives to insinuate into the mind of his patron a suspicion of the virtue of Mary, which is strengthened by her being in reality the confidante of Kenrick, to whom he artfully represents her as unlawfully attached. This plot, in itself rather threadbare, is not, in the present instance, managed with uncommon felicity, The circumstances which excite the suspicions, and finally the furious rage of Fleetwood, are such as usually occur in such cases; but when he drives his pregnant spouse out of his house, he carries his jealous resentment to a most disgusting excess. We can pardon the vehemence of Othello, who kills his wife outright; but, in exposing a destitute orphan to all the miseries of poverty and beggary, we humbly think Fleetwood merits any title better than that of a man of feeling. At the same time that he has been guilty of this outrage, he continues distractedly fond of his wife, as will plainly appear from the following scene enacted upon the Continent, whither he had retired from the scene of his supposed disgrace and actual misery. He ordered wax models to be made, so as to represent his wife and her supposed seducer, with a barrel-organ modulated to the tunes which they used to play and sing together. These were to be produced on the anniversary of his wedding-night.

"When at length the 15th of July came, I caused a supper of cold meats to be prepared, and spread in an apartment of my hotel. All the materials which I had procured with so much care and expense, were shut up in the closets of this apartment.

I locked myself in, and drew them forth one after another. At each interval of the ceremony, I seated myself in a chair, my arms folded, my eyes fixed, and gazed on the object before me in all the luxury of despair. When the whole was arranged, I returned to my seat, and continued there a long time. I then had recourse to my organ, and played the different tunes it was formed to repeat. Never had madness in any age or country so voluptuous a banquet.

"I have a very imperfect recollection of the conclusion of this scene. For a long time I was slow and deliberate in my operations. Suddenly my temper changed. While I was playing on my organ one of the tunes of Kenrick and Mary —it was a duet of love: the mistress, in a languishing and tender style, charged her lover with indifference; the lover threw himself at her feet, and poured out his soul in terms of adoration. My mind underwent a strange revolution. I no longer distinctly knew where I was, or could distinguish fiction from reality. I looked wildly and with glassy eyes all round the room; I gazed at the figure of Mary; I thought it was, and it was not, Mary. With mad and idle action I put some provisions on her plate; I bowed to her in mockery, and invited her to eat. Then again I grew serious and vehement; I addressed her with inward and convulsive accents in the language of reproach; I declaimed with uncommon flow of words upon her abandoned and infernal deceit; all the tropes that imagination ever supplied to the tongue of man seemed to be at my command. I know not whether this speech was to be considered as earnest, or as the Sardonic and bitter jest of a maniac. But, while I was still speaking, I saw her move—if I live, I saw it. She turned her eyes this way and that; she grinned and chattered at me. I looked from her to the other figure; that grinned and chattered too. Instantly a full and proper madness seized me; I grinned and chattered in turn to the figures before me. It was not words that I heard or uttered; it was murmurs and hissings, and lowings and howls. I became furious. I dashed the organ into a thousand fragments. I rent the child-bed linen, and tore it with my teeth. I dragged the clothes which Mary had worn, from off the figure that represented her, and rent them into long strips and shreds. I struck the figures vehemently with the chairs and other furniture of the room, till they were broken to pieces. I threw at them, in despite, the plates and other brittle implements of the supper-table. I raved and

roared with all the power of my voice. I must have made a noise like hell broke loose; but I had given my valet a charge that I should not be intruded upon; and he, who was one of the tallest and strongest of men, and who ever executed his orders literally, obstinately defended the door of my chamber against all inquisitiveness. At the time, this behaviour of his I regarded as fidelity; it will be accounted for hereafter. He was the tool of Gifford; he had orders that I should not be disturbed; it was hoped that this scene would be the conclusion of my existence. I am firmly persuaded that, in the last hour or two, I suffered tortures not inferior to those which the North American savages inflict on their victims; and, like those victims, when the apparatus of torture was suspended, I sunk into immediate insensibility. In this state I was found, with all the lights of the apartment extinguished, when, at last, the seemingly stupid exactness of my valet gave way to the impatience of others, and they broke open the door."—Vol. iii. p. 248-253.

The rest of the story may be comprised in a few words. Gifford, whom Fleetwood had constituted his heir, becomes impatient to enter upon possession; and, finding his patron's constitution proof against mental distress, he attempts, with the assistance of two ruffians, to murder him in the forest of Fontainbleau. As *all* Fleetwood's servants were in Gifford's pay, they saw this transaction take place without interference—a circumstance which struck their master so forcibly, that, while the ruffians were dragging him into the wood, he was considering whether it be one of the effects of wealth, that with it we engage persons in our service to murder us. The solution of this problem, as well as the consummation of Gifford's crime, is interrupted by the arrival of some horsemen, who rescue Fleetwood, and make the assailants prisoners. That Kenrick was his preserver will be readily anticipated by all who are acquainted with

the good old beaten track of novels on these occasions; and to do Mr. Godwin justice, he has seldom taken a by-path from one end of this performance to the other. Gifford is consigned to the gallows, which he had merited; the clouds of jealousy, which had obscured the mind of Fleetwood, are gradually dispelled; every suspicious circumstance is accounted for; and after some hesitation (very natural, we think) on the part of Mary, she is again united to the Man of Feeling.

Having occupied so much room in detailing the story, we have but little left for animadversion. The incidents during the two first volumes are chiefly those of the common life of a man of fashion; and all that is remarkable in the tale is the laboured extravagance of sentiment which is attached to these ordinary occurrences. There is no attempt to describe the minuter and finer shades of feeling; none of that high finishing of description, by which the most ordinary incidents are rendered interesting: on the contrary, the effect is always sought to be brought out by the application of the inflated language of high passion. It is no doubt true, that a man of sensibility will be deeply affected by what appears trifling to the rest of mankind; a scene of distress or of pleasure will make a deeper impression upon him than upon another; and it is precisely in this respect that he differs from the rest of mankind. But a man who is transported with rage, with despair, with anger, and all the furious impulses of passion, upon the most common occurrences of life, is not a man of

sentiment, but a madman; and, far from sympathising with his feelings, we are only surprised at his having the liberty of indulging them beyond the precincts of Bedlam.

In the third volume, something of a regular story commences, and the attention of the reader becomes fixed by the narrative. But the unnatural atrocity of Gifford, and the inadequate means by which he is so nearly successful, render this part of the tale rather improbable. The credulity of Fleetwood is unnecessarily excessive, and might have been avoided by a more artful management of incident.

But we have another and a more heavy objection to him, considered as a man of feeling. We have been accustomed to associate with our ideas of this character the amiable virtues of a Harley, feeling deeply the distresses of others, and patient, though not insensible of his own. But Fleetwood, through the whole three volumes which bear his name, feels absolutely and exclusively for one individual, and that individual is Fleetwood himself. Indeed he is at great pains, in various places, to tell us that he had been uncontrolled in his youth, was little accustomed to contradiction, and could not brook any thing which interfered either with his established habits, or the dispositions of the moment. Accordingly his despair for the loss of his two French mistresses, is the despair of a man who loses something which he thinks necessary to his happiness and in a way not very soothing to his feelings; but as we understand him, he can no more be pro-

perly said to be in love with either of these fair ladies, than a hungry man, according to Fielding's comparison, can be said to be in love with a shoulder of Welsh mutton. In like manner, his pursuit after happiness, through various scenes, is uniformly directed by the narrow principle of self-gratification; there is no aspiration towards promoting the public advantage, or the happiness of individuals; Mr Fleetwood moves calmly forward in quest of what may make Mr Fleetwood happy; and, like all other egotists of this class, he providentially misses his aim. But it is chiefly in the wedded state that his irritable and selfish habits are most completely depicted. With every tie, moral and divine, which can bind a man to the object of his choice, or which could withhold him from acts of unkindness or cruelty, he commences and carries on a regular system for subjecting all her pleasures to the control of his own, and every attempt on her part to free herself from this constraint, produces such scenes of furious tyranny, as at the beginning nearly urge her to distraction, and finally drive her an outcast from society. In short, the new Man of Feeling, in his calm moments a determined egotist, is, in his state of irritation, a frantic madman, who plays on a barrel-organ at a puppet-show, till he and the wooden dramatis personæ are all possessed by the foul fiend Hibbertigibbet, who presides over *moping* and *mowing*. We close the book with the painful reflection, that Mary is once more subjected to his tyranny; and our only hope is, that a certain Mr Scarborough, a very peremptory and

overbearing person, who assists at the *dénouement*, may, in case of need, be a good hand at putting on a strait waistcoat.

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## ARTICLE V.

### CUMBERLAND'S JOHN DE LANCASTER.

[*John de Lancaster, a Novel. By* RICHARD CUMBERLAND, Esq. 3 Vols.—*From the Quarterly Review*, 1809.]

MR CUMBERLAND has now borne arms in the fields of literature for more than half a century:[1] the nature of his service has been as various as its date has been protracted; nor has his warfare been without its success and its honours. If he has never been found in the very van and front of battle, he has seldom lagged in the rear; and although we cannot find that he has on any occasion brought home the *spolia opima*, or qualified himself for the grand triumph, it must be allowed that he has often merited and obtained the humbler meed of an ovation. His dramatic pieces are those on

[1] [Mr Cumberland died 7th May, 1811, in his eightieth year, and was interred in Poet's Corner, Westminster Abbey. For an account of his Life and Writings, see *ante*, vol. iii. pp. 191–230.]

which his fame will hereafter most probably rest. But the "Terence of England, the mender of hearts," unsatisfied with having made more than one successful effort in modern comedy, perhaps the most difficult of all compositions, seemed determined to show us that his vein though fertile was not inexhaustible, and that the friend of Garrick, of Goldsmith, and of Johnson, could write plays fit only to be prefatory to the more important matter of *Mother Goose*. These must be forgotten ere the author of the *West Indian*, the *Brothers*, the *Jew*, and the *Wheel of Fortune*, can enjoy his full honours; but we can comfort him with the assurance that the date of their memory is already nearly expired. As a periodical writer, Mr Cumberland's classical learning and accurate taste, his beautiful and flowing style, and the pleasing subjects on which he usually loves to employ himself, compensate in some degree for want of depth of thought, or novelty of conception. It is hardly possible to speak too highly of his translations from Aristophanes and the ancient Greek fragments, they are not only equal, but superior, to any thing of the kind in our language, and so great is our respect for the author of these exquisite versions, that we will not say a single word of his original poetry.

But it is as a novelist that we are at present to examine Mr Cumberland's literary powers. We cannot place *Arundel* and *Henry* on the same shelf with the works of Fielding or Smollet, and we are the less inclined to do so, as the latter novel, being

a close imitation of *Tom Jones*, serves particularly to show the wide difference between the authors. Yet Mr Cumberland's novels rank far above the usual stock in trade of the circulating library, are written in easy and elegant language, and evince considerable powers of observing generic, though not individual, characters. Excepting Smollet alone, whose sailors are, moreover, of a more ancient and rugged school, none has better delineated the characteristic and professional traits of the British navy, than Mr Cumberland. The mission to Spain filled his portfolio with interesting sketches of that people, and of the persecuted Jews, who yet reside amongst them, which we often trace in his novels, tales, and dramatic labours. The works of former authors he has laid liberally under contribution, and sometimes new-dressed their characters so well, as to give them an air of originality. Thus Ephraim Daw, in *Henry*, is a methodistical Parson Adams, having the same simplicity of character, the same goodness of heart, and the same disposition to use the carnal arm in a good cause, qualified by the enthusiastic tenets and language of the sect from which the author derives him. It is therefore, we repeat, rather in delineating a species than an individual that the art of Mr Cumberland consists, so far as it is original, the distinguishing personal features which he introduces being usually borrowed from others. Indeed we know but two remarkable peculiarities of taste in manners and incident which are completely his own, and run through all his works. The first is an odd and

rather unnatural transfer of the task of courtship from the hero to the heroine of the piece. Mr Cumberland seems to have found an inexpressible charm in exchanging the attributes of the sexes, so that the weaker may turn the chase upon the stronger, and the pigeon become the pursuer of the hawk. The frank and exacting manners of Charlotte Rusport, and his other ladies, (which, should they ever become fashionable, would be no slight inconvenience to our modish gentlemen) were carried to their height in the novel of *Henry*, in which the virtues of continence and chastity, which, ever since the days of Heliodorus, the first novelist on record, have been esteemed the indispensable and inalienable property of the heroine of the tale, were, *vi et armis*, transferred to the hero, leaving the unfortunate damsel to whom they rightfully belonged as bare of both as the birch-tree of leaves upon Christmas eve. This singular taste seemed so deeply ingrafted in Mr Cumberland's system of writing, that when we understood that he had selected a scriptural subject for his last poem, we never doubted for an instant that he had given the preference to the history of Joseph and Potiphar's wife. And though then mistaken, we find the present novel exhibiting symptoms too peculiar to be overlooked in a general view of Mr Cumberland's literary character. The second predilection to which we alluded, is the peculiar pleasure which this author finds in a duel with all its previous pomp and circumstance of gentlemanlike defiance, retort, and reproof valiant. A single com-

bat, either commenced or completed, makes a part of almost all his narratives, and Dr Caranza himself cannot be estimated a more perfect judge of points of honour concerning the distance, the arms, and all the punctilio of the duello. Of this there is enough, and to spare, in the following pages.

The story of *John de Lancaster* is neither long nor complicated. The principal character and real hero of the novel is Robert de Lancaster, an ancient Welsh Esquire, whose character is derived from that of a Mr Shandy, senior, checkered with the hundred attributes of Cornelius Scriblerus, father of the renowned Martinus. He is a great reader of all such learned works as convey neither instruction nor information, and in perusing the ancient historians, whether of the classical or Gothic period, "holds each stranger tale devoutly true." This humour is pushed into the regions of utter and raving extravagance, especially as, saving in points of learning or science, we are required to believe that the old gentleman is not only of a sane mind, but endowed with uncommon good sense and talents, as well as with an admirable temper and most benevolent disposition, the cast whereof we think he derived from a certain Squire Alworthy, of Alworthy Hall in Somersetshire, who may not be utterly unknown to some of our readers. The credulity of this worthy person being seconded by no small quantity of family pride, he places implicit reliance on a pedigree which deduces his family in a direct line, not from Brutus or Howel Dha, but from Samothes, son of Japheth, the third son of

Noah; and believes that his ancestor acquired the family-estate sixty-six years after the taking of Troy, and eleven hundred thirty and two years before the Christian era. He credits another tradition, which affirms that his ancestor taught King Bladud to fly; and another concerning an island in Ireland where the natives are immortal. As if this burden were not sufficient for his faith, he believes with Mr Shandy in the effect of Christian-names upon their owners, with Cornelius Scriblerus in the influence of the harp in appeasing insurrections, and contends that "soft airs well executed on the flute, were found to be a never failing cure for the sciatica or hip-gout."—Vol. i. p. 289.

When the tale opens, Robert de Lancaster is residing quietly in his hereditary castle with his daughter Cecilia, an amiable old maid, his son Philip, a sort of cousin-german to the author's excellent Ned Drowsy, and his daughter-in-law, wife of the said Philip, who is then just about to add an heir to Kray Castle, and a link to the lineage of Samothes ap Japheth ap Noah. This desirable event is hastened in a very undesirable manner by an awkward Welsh baronet, named Sir Owen ap Owen, who, in a fit of tumultuous gallantry, overturns the tea-equipage into the lap of Mrs De Lancaster. While she receives the necessary attendance in her premature accouchement, the group below are left in circumstances which again fatally remind us of the *Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*. The elder De Lancaster on this occasion harangues his friend Colonel Wilson, a maimed

officer on half-pay, the Uncle Toby of the tale, whose blunt, soldier-like simplicity is meant to contrast the absurd ingenuity of his patron.

"So many things are assumed without being examined, and so many disbelieved without being disproved, that I am not hasty to assent or dissent in compliment to the multitude; and on this account perhaps I am considered as a man affecting singularity; I hope I am not to be found guilty of that idle affectation, only because I would not be a dealer in opinions, which I have not weighed before I deliver them out. Above all things I would not traffic in conjectures, but carefully avoid imposing upon others or myself by confident anticipation, when nothing can be affirmed with certainty in this mortal state of chance and change, that is not grounded on conviction; for instance, in the case of the lady above stairs, whose situation keeps our hopes and fears upon the balance, our presumption is, that Mrs De Lancaster shall be delivered of a child, either male or female, and in all respects like other children—

"'I confess,' said Wilson, 'that is my presumption, and I should be most outrageously astonished, should it happen otherwise.'

"'I don't think it likely,' murmured Philip.

"'No, no, no,' replied De Lancaster; 'but we need not be reminded how many preternatural and prodigious births have occurred and been recorded in the annals of mankind. Whether the natives of the town of Stroud near Rochester are to this day under the ban of Thomas à Becket, I am not informed; but when, in contempt of that holy person, they wantonly cut off the tail of his mule as he rode through their street, you have it from authority that every child thenceforward born to an inhabitant of Stroud was punished by the appendage of an incommodious and enormous tail, exactly corresponding with that which had been amputated from the archbishop's mule.'

"Here a whistle from the colonel [to the tune of Lilibulero, we presume] struck the auditory nerves of Philip, who, gently laying his hand upon his stump, gravely reminded him that Becket was a saint—

"De Lancaster proceeded—'What then shall we say of the famous Martin Luther, who being ordained to act so conspicuous a part in opposition to the papal power, came into the world fully equipped for controversy; his mother being delivered of her

infant (wonderful to relate) habited in all points as a theologian, and (which I conceive must have sensibly incommoded her) wearing a square cap on his head, according to academic costume. This, Colonel Wilson, may perhaps appear to you, as no doubt it did to the midwife, and all present at his birth, as a very extraordinary and preternatural circumstance.'

"'It does not indeed appear so,' said the colonel. 'I know you don't invent the fable; I should like to know your authority for it.'

"'My authority,' replied De Lancaster, 'in this case, is the same as in that of Becket's mule; Martinus Delrius is my authority for both; and when we find this gravely set forth by a writer of such high dignity and credit, himself a doctor of theology, and public professor of the Holy Scriptures in the University of Salamanca, who is bold enough to question it?'

"'I am not bold enough to believe it,' said Wilson."—Pp. 25–29.

During this learned discussion, which we produce as a specimen of the dialogue and manners, Mrs Philip de Lancaster is disencumbered of a boy, who, after such absurd ceremony as suited an old humourist, that half expected his grandson's arrival with a tail at one extremity, and a doctor's cap at the other, is christened by the name of John de Lancaster. We are next treated with a long account of a visit actually achieved by the ancient De Lancaster to another old gentleman called Ap Morgan, the father of Mrs Philip de Lancaster, and maternal grandfather to the infantine hero. Ap Morgan, it seems, had discovered (something of the latest) that when through paternal influence his daughter was induced to bestow her hand upon the descendant of King Samothes, she had sacrificed to filial duty a tender predilection in favour of a certain gallant young officer, by name Captain

Jones. This circumstance he communicates to old De Lancaster, acquainting him at the same time, in very civil terms, that he was grieved to death at having conferred his daughter on so stupid a fellow as his son Philip, when she had made a so much better choice for herself. To repay this confidence, De Lancaster proves to Morgan, without the assistance of Delrius, that he was not responsible for the consequences of her obstinate silence, that their son and daughter were admirably matched, the lady being a religious hypochondriac, and the gentleman a mere cypher; and that their parental tenderness ought to overlook both as a blank in their lineage, fixing their only hopes upon the grandson, whom, under Providence, they had been the means of producing to the De Lancasters and Ap Morgans.—All which is admitted by old Morgan as a "cure of the mournfuls;" his taste in consolation being at least as peculiar as that of his friend in history and philosophy.—Mean while, Penruth Abbey, the seat of Sir Owen Ap Owen, receives two important inmates. These are a Spanish lady, or rather a Spanish Jewess, widow to a brother of the baronet who had settled in Spain, and her son, the heir of the title and estate.

The descendants of Israel were heretofore favourites with Mr Cumberland. The characters of Abraham Abrahams in the *Observer*, of Sheva in the *Jew*, even of Nicolas Pedrosa in the lively tale which bears his name, are honourable and able testimonies of his efforts to stem popular prejudice

in favour of a people, degraded because they are oppressed, and ridiculed because they are degraded. Apparently, however, he hath repented him of his inclination towards the Jews, for not only do this same Mrs Ap Owen and her son exhibit characters the most base, malicious, and detestable, but their descent from the stock of Abraham is thrown at their heads by all who speak of them, and is obviously held out as one source at least of their enormities. There is a singular passage in Mr Cumberland's Memoirs, from which it would seem that the guilt of negligence at least, if not of ingratitude, worse than witchcraft, has, in his opinion, attached to the synagogue.[1] Perhaps this may be one cause why he now spits upon their Jewish gaberdine.

In tracing the crimes of the Ap Owens, Mr Cumberland follows the maxim, "Nemo repente turpissimus." The mother sets out by entrapping the leisure, if not the heart, of Mr Philip de Lan-

[1] "The public prints gave the Jews credit for their sensibility in acknowledging my well-intended services; my friends gave me joy of honorary presents, and some even accused me of ingratitude for not making public my thanks for their munificence. I will speak plainly on this point; I do most heartily wish they had flattered me with some token, however small, of which I might have said *this is a tribute to my philanthropy*, and delivered it down to my children, as my beloved father did to me his badge of favour from the citizens of Dublin: but not a word from the lips, not a line did I ever receive from the pen of any Jew, though I have found myself in company with many of their nation; and in this perhaps the gentlemen are quite right, whilst I had formed expectations, that were quite wrong; for if I have said for them only what they deserve, why should I be thanked for it? But if I have said more, much more, than they deserve, can they do a wiser thing than hold their tongues?"

caster, whose hypochondriac spouse is now expected to bid the world good night, under the influence of a slow decline. The character of David Ap Owen also opens gradually on the reader. He first pinches the tail of a lap-dog: secondly, he gallops past young John de Lancaster, in hunting, and maliciously bespatters him with mud and gravel, to the great damage of his clothes, and danger of his precious eyesight: thirdly, this "Jew-born miscreant," as De Lancaster terms him, insults the youthful heir of Kray Castle at a festive meeting of the family harpers. But a darker scene is soon to open,—Sir Owen Ap Owen, worried out of his life by his sister-in-law and nephew, dies about the period when John de Lancaster, from an amiable and promising boy, has become a gallant youth. The baronet had bequeathed to Cecilia de Lancaster, a valuable diamond ring,—to young John, a favourite hunter. The ring is stolen by Mrs Ap Owen, the horse hamstrung by her son, now Sir David. Their villany and cruelty are detected. The gentlemen of the country, attached to the interest of the House of Owen, and members of a hunt over which the heir of that family presided, proceed to hold, what, for want of a better word, we shall call a *grand palaver*, upon this important occasion; and, after a solemn investigation of these delinquencies, transfer, in all form, their friendship and allegiance to the rival house of De Lancaster. Sir David and his mother are hooted from Wales, and obliged to retreat to Portugal. This dark picture is mingled with softer shades;

John de Lancaster falls in love with a beautiful girl, the daughter of that same Captain Jones to whom his mother had been early attached. Mrs Philip de Lancaster had placed all her earthly hopes on planning a match between her son and the daughter of her lover. Yet this seemed an untoward project, for at their very first interview, John, as he is usually and concisely termed, being so much struck with the young lady's beauty as to substitute an ardent embrace for the more formal salutation of a bow, alarms the discreet *gouvernante*, who, ignorant of Mrs De Lancaster's views, secludes the young lady from so unceremonious a visitor. This occasions some slight misunderstandings and embarrassments, which we have not time to trace or disentangle, as we hasten to the conclusion of the novel.

While Mrs Philip de Lancaster was quietly dying at Kray Castle, her husband was suddenly seized with the fancy of setting out to take lodgings for her at Montpellier. Most people would have thought his company on the road more necessary to the invalid than his exertions as an *avant courier*. But this worthy *poco curante* was exactly in the situation of the Jolly Miller, who cared for nobody and nobody for him, so he was permitted to execute his plan of travelling without remonstrance or interference. His evil destiny guided him to Lisbon, where he received news of his lady's decease, and immediately after fell into the society, and of course into the toils, of the Ap Owens. These Jewish—Spanish—Welsh repro-

bates, by the assistance of a Portuguese bravo with long whiskers, compelled poor Philip to sign a bond, obliging himself, under a high penalty, to marry Mrs Ap Owen before the expiration of three months. No sooner had he submitted to this degrading engagement, than he became anxious to evade the completion, and wrote a most dismal penitentiary letter to his son John, imploring him to hasten to Lisbon and rescue him from the matrimonial shackles about to be forcibly imposed on him. This epistle was delivered at Kray Castle by a Mr Devereux, who had sailed for England to learn something of the characters of Sir David Ap Owen, ere he countenanced his addresses to his sister. He is soon convinced of the infamy of the baronet, and returns to Portugal with young Lancaster, who loses not a moment in flying to his father's assistance. He came, however, too late. Philip was doomed to lose his life through the only exertion of courage which its course exhibited. Sir David had urged the fulfilment of the bond, and, in a rencontre which followed, basely availed himself of the assistance of his bravo, to murder his intended father-in-law. When John arrived, he found his father mortally wounded, and his enemy in the hands of justice. The former dies—the latter commits suicide, and Mrs Ap Owen throws herself into a convent or a synagogue, we forget which. The fair hand of Miss Devereux is conferred upon the son of Colonel Wilson, a gallant young officer, who had accompanied John on his Portuguese crusade. Her hand indeed he had

proudly refused to solicit, and almost to accept; for we are told that her father's coffers overflowed with the gold of Brazil, and that his daughter was a rock of diamonds, while her lover was in all respects a soldier of fortune. But this difficulty is overcome, as is usual in Mr Cumberland's plots, by the express solicitations of the fair lady. The return of the whole party to England is followed by the nuptials of Amelia and John de Lancaster. His grandfather, for their guidance, was pleased to compose a code of rules for domestic happiness in the married state, which are thus described:

"They consisted chiefly of truisms, which he was at the pains of proving; and of errors so obvious, that examination could not make them clearer. He pointed out so many ways, by which man and wife must render each other miserable, that he seemed to have forgot that the purport of his rules was to make them happy. So little was this learned work adapted to the object held out in the title, that, if it had been pasted up for general use on the door of a church, it may be doubted if any, who had read it, would have entered there to be married."

In *John de Lancaster*, although we cannot attach the importance to it which is claimed by the author, we find a good deal to praise. The language is uniformly elegant and well-turned, some of the repartees are neatly introduced, and the occasional observations of the author are in general pointed and sensible. Some scenes of pathetic interest arise from the death of a young woman, robbed of her virtue by the nefarious Sir David Owen. A Welsh harper and poet is repeatedly introduced, and many of his lyrical effusions are not inferior to those of Mr Dibdin. The following verses

might be sung to advantage at a charity dinner when the subscription books were opened, provided a few bumper toasts had previously circulated.

"Let thy cash buy the blessing and pray'r of the poor,
And let them intercede when death comes to thy door;
They perhaps may appease that importunate power,
When thy coffers can't buy the reprieve of an hour.

"Foolish man, don't you know every grain of your gold
May give food to the hungry and warmth to the cold,
A purchase in this world shall soon pass away,
But a treasure in Heaven will never decay."—&c. &c.

Of the skill exhibited in conducting the incidents, we cannot speak with much applause. The black and flagitious villany of Owen is without any adequate motive, and is, therefore, inartificial and revolting. Besides, John and he squabble and affront and threaten each other through the whole book, without coming to any personal issue. They are constantly levelling their pistols, and alarming our nerves with the apprehension that they will go off at half-cock. We have, however, in this, as in all Mr Cumberland's novels, the pleasing feeling that virtue goes on from triumph to triumph, and that vice is baffled in its schemes, even by their own baseness and atrocity. There is, we think, no attempt at peculiarity of character, unless in the outline of the grandfather, whose extravagance is neither original nor consistent. Mr Cumberland assures us that he has turned over many volumes to supply Robert de Lancaster with the absurd hobby-horsical erudition diffused through his conversation. No one will dispute Mr Cumberland's

learning, but the allusions to the classics might have been taken from any ordinary work on antiquities; and to black letter lore, he makes no pretence, almost all his hero's references being to imaginary authors, and the quotations devised for the nonce by Mr Cumberland himself. This is the more unpardonable, as a display of ancient Welsh manners, and appropriate allusions to the history, legends and traditions of Gyneth, Prestatyn, and Deheubarth, would have given his hero's character the air, if not the substance, of originality. The insertion of vague gibberish is a wretched substitute. Had Ritson been alive he might have rued his rash intrusion on this sacred ground. The invention (even in jest) of suppositious authorities and quotations, would certainly have brought down castigation under some quaint and newly furbished title, which had already served to introduce the satire of Nash, Harvey, or Martin Marprelate, such as "*Pap with a hatchet, or a Fig for my Grannum;*" or, "*A very merrie and pithie Comedie, intituled, The longer thou livest the more Fool thou art.*"

Mr Cumberland has made an affecting apology for the imperfections of his novel, by calling upon us to consider his long services and advanced age. It is perhaps a harsh answer, that every work must be judged of by its internal merit, whether composed like that of Lipsius, upon the day in which he was born, or, like the last tragedy of Sophocles, upon the very verge of human existence. We should, therefore, have listened more favourably to

this personal plea, had we not been provoked by a strain of querulous discontent, neither worthy of the author's years, of his philosophy, nor of his real goodness of heart. We have, for example, the following doleful lamentation over the praise and the pudding, which, he alleges, have been gobbled up by his contemporaries.

"If, in the course of my literary labours, I had been less studious to adhere to nature and simplicity, I am perfectly convinced I should have stood higher in estimation with the purchasers of copyrights, and probably been read and patronised by my contemporaries in the proportion of ten to one. To acquire a popularity of name, which might set the speculating publishers upon out-bidding one another for an embryo work (perhaps in meditation only) seems to be as proud and enviable a pre-eminence as human genius can arrive at: but if that pre-eminence has been acquired by a fashion of writing, that luckily falls in with the prevailing taste for the romantic and unnatural, that writer, whoever he may be, has only made his advantage of the present hour, and forfeited his claim upon the time to come: having paid this tribute to popularity, he certainly may enjoy the profits of deception, and take his chance for being marked out by posterity (whenever a true taste for nature shall revive) as the misleader and impostor of the age he lived in.

"The circulation of a work is propagated by the cry of the many; its perpetuity is established by the fiat of the few. If we have no concern for our good name after we have left this world, how do we greatly differ from the robber and the assassin? —But this is nothing but an old man's prattle. Nobody regards it—We will return to our history."—Vol. ii. p. 176.

By our troth, Mr Cumberland, these be very bitter words. We are no defenders of ghost-seeing and diablerie.—That mode of exciting interest ought to be despised as too obvious and too much in vulgar use; but, when the appeal is made to nature, we must recollect that there are incredibilities in the moral, as well as physical, world. Whole nations

have believed in demons and witches; but who can believe that such a caricatura as Robert de Lancaster ever existed out of the precincts of Bedlam?—There is no one that has not, at some period of his life, felt interested in a ghost-story; but it is impossible to sympathize with a character who pins his faith to figments as gross as if in his respect for green cheese he had conceived the moon to be composed of that savoury edible. Mr Cumberland's assumed contempt of public applause we cannot but consider as an unworthy affectation. In fact, few men have shown more eagerness to engross the public favour, of which he now grudges his contemporaries their slight and transitory share. His papers have come flying abroad on the wings of the hawkers. He has written comedies at which we have cried, and tragedies at which we have laughed: he has composed indecent novels and religious epics. He has pandered to the public lust for personal anecdote, by writing his own life, and the private history of his acquaintances.

> "At length he took his muse and dipt her
> Full in the middle of the Scripture:
> What wonders there the man grown old did,
> Sternhold himself he out-Sternholded."

Popularity we own to be a frail nymph, and far too free of her favours; but we cannot see her lashed by an author, who has strained every nerve to gain a share of them, without recollecting the exclamation of Lear:—

> "Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand!
> Why dost thou lash that whore?—Strip thine own back;
> Thou hotly lust'st to use her in that kind
> For which thou whipp'st her."

Neither can we offer Mr Cumberland much consolation on the other topic of his complaint. He seems to think of this predilection of the public as Trinculo did of losing his bottle in the pool, and grows doubly indignant at the pipe and tabor of the deluding Demonologist—"There is not only dishonour in it, but an infinite loss—yet this is your innocent goblin!" The gentlemen of Paternoster-row we are afraid, notwithstanding Mr Cumberland's diatribe, will continue obstinately to prefer discounting drafts on the present generation, payable at sight, to long-dated bills on posterity, which cannot be accepted till both the drawer and holder have become immortal in every sense of the word.

Upon the whole, we rejoice that an old and valued friend has, at the advanced age of seventy-six, strength and spirits to amuse himself and the public with his compositions; and we think it will conduce greatly to both, if he will cease to fret himself because of the success of ballad-singers, ghost-seers, and the young Roscius. If they flourish at present, let him console himself with the transitory quality of their prosperity. We dare not soothe him too much by assenting to the counter-part of his prophecy: for although the hopes of future glory have been the consolation of every bard under immediate neglect, yet experience compels us to confess that they are usually fallacious. Contemporary applause does not once, perhaps, in an hundred times, ensure that of posterity; but few names are handed down to immortality, which have not been distinguished in their own generation;

and least of all do we anticipate any splendid accession to the posthumous fame of an author, whose talents do not, in the present day, rank him above a dignified and respectable mediocrity.

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## ARTICLE VI.

### MATURIN'S FATAL REVENGE.

[*Fatal Revenge; or, the Family of Montorio: a Romance. By* DENNIS JASPER MURPHY.[1] 3 *vols.* 8*vo. London.* 1807.—*Quarterly Review,* 1810.]

*J'APPRENDS d'être vif.* Such was the noted answer of a German baron who had alarmed a whole Parisian hotel by leaping over joint-stools in his solitary apartment. This mode of qualifying himself for the lively conversation of the French was probably attended with some fatigue to the worthy *Frei-herr's* person, and perhaps some damage to his shins; with which we the more readily sympathize, as, in compliance with the hint of several well-meaning friends, we are just taking the

[1] [Afterwards avowed of the Rev. C. R. Maturin.]

pen after some desperate efforts *pour apprendre à être vif.* It was whispered to us, in no unfriendly voice, that we were respectable classical scholars, divines at least as serious as was necessary, tolerable politicians, considering the old-fashioned nature of our principles, and as good philosophers as could be expected of persons obviously trammelled by belief in the tenets which, in compliance with ancient custom, are still delivered once in seven days to those who choose to hear them. It seemed further to be allowed, that we were indifferent good hands at a sarcasm, and displayed some taste for poetry; but still we were not lively—that is, we had none of those light and airy articles which a young lady might read while her hair was papering. To sum up all in one dismal syllable, it was insinuated that we were *dull.* To prove the futility of the charge, we resolved to extend the sphere of our enquiries; and to review not only the grave and weighty, but the flitting and evanescent productions of the times; for the purpose of giving full scope to our ingenuity, and evincing the vivacity of our talents, so wantonly called in question. The want of proper subjects for the exercise of our powers was the first dilemma. We had no friendly correspondent at the court of Paris who, with a sentimental flourish on the peace which ought to subsist in the republic of letters, though war raged between the respective countries of the sages, might forward, through some kind neutral, the last new novel or the latest philosophical discovery of the Institute, and only expect us, in

requital, to give the wit and learning and science of the Great Nation its reasonable and just precedence over those of our own country. What then was to be done? After some consideration, we sent to our publisher for an assortment of the newest and most fashionable novels, hoping to find among the frivolous articles of domestic manufacture something to supply the want of foreign importation. It is from a laborious inspection into the contents of this packet, or rather hamper, that we are now risen with the painful conviction that spirits and patience may be as completely exhausted in perusing trifles as in following algebraical calculations. Before proceeding, however, to the novel selected almost at random for the subject of a few remarks, we cannot but express our surprise at the present degradation of this class of compositions.

The elegant and fascinating productions which honoured the name of novel, those which Richardson, Mackenzie, and Burney, gave to the public; of which it was the object to exalt virtue and degrade vice; to which no fault could be objected unless that they unfitted here and there a romantic mind for the common intercourse of life, while they refined perhaps a thousand whose faculties could better bear the fair ideal which they presented—these have entirely vanished from the shelves of the circulating library. It may indeed be fairly alleged in defence of those who decline attempting this higher and more refined species of composition, that the soil was in some degree exhausted by overcropping—that the multitude of base and tawdry

imitations obscured the merit of the few which are tolerable, as the overwhelming blaze of blue, red, green, and yellow, at the exhibition, vitiates our taste for the few good paintings which show their modest hues upon its walls. The public was indeed weary of the protracted embarrassments of lords and ladies who spoke such language as was never spoken, and still more so of the sea-saw correspondence between the sentimental Lady Lucretia and the witty Miss Caroline, who battledored it in the pathetic and the lively, like Morton and Reynolds on the stage. But let us be just to dead and to living merit. In some of the novels of the late Charlotte Smith, we found no ordinary portion of that fascinating power which leads us through every various scene of happiness or distress at the will of the author; which places the passions of the wise and grave for a time under the command of ideal personages; and perhaps has more attraction for the public at large than any other species of literary composition, the drama not excepted. Nor do we owe less to Miss Edgeworth, whose true and vivid pictures of modern life contain the only sketches reminding us of human beings, whom, secluded as we are, we have actually seen and conversed with in various parts of this great metropolis.

When we had removed from the surface of our hamper a few thin volumes of simple and insipid sentiment; taken a moment's breath; and exclaimed "O Athenians, how hard we labour for your applause!" we lighted upon a class of books which excited sterner sensations. There existed formerly

a species of novel of a tragi-comic nature, which, far from pretending to the extreme sentiment and delicacy of the works last mentioned, admitted, like the elder English comedy, a considerable dash of coarse and even indelicate humour. Such were the compositions of Fielding; and such of Smollet, the literary Hogarth, whose figures, though they seldom attained grace or elegance, were marked with indelible truth and peculiarity of character. Instead of this kind of comic satire, in which to borrow a few words of Old Withers, abuses, when whipped, were perhaps stripped a little too bare, we have now the lowest denizens of Grub Street narrating, under the flimsy veil of false names, and through the medium of a fictitious tale, all that malevolence can invent and stupidity propagate concerning private misfortunes and personal characters. We have our Winters in London, Bath, and Brighton, of which it is the dirty object to drag forth the secret history of the day, and to give to Scandal a court of written record. The talent which most of these things indicate is that of the lowest newspaper composition, and the acquaintance with the fashionable world precisely what might be gleaned from the footman or porter; while the portraits of Bow Street officers, swindlers, and bailiffs, are possibly drawn from a more intimate acquaintance. The shortness of our cruise has not yet permitted us to fall in with any of these picaroons; but let them beware, as Lieutenant Bowling says, how they come athwart our hawser;

"we shall mind running them down no more than so many porpoises."

"Plunging from depth to depth a vast profound," we at length imagined ourselves arrived at the Limbus Patrum in good earnest. The imitators of Mrs Radcliffe and Mr Lewis were before us; personages who, to all the faults and extravagances of their originals, added that of dulness, with which they can seldom be charged. We strolled through a variety of castles, each of which was regularly called Il Castello; met with as many captains of condottieri; heard various ejaculations of Santa Maria and Diabolo; read by a decaying lamp, and in a tapestried chamber, dozens of legends as stupid as the main history; examined such suites of deserted apartments as might fit up a reasonable barrack; and saw as many glimmering lights as would make a respectable illumination—Amid these flat imitations of the *Castle of Udolpho*, we lighted unexpectedly upon the work which is the subject of the present article, and, in defiance of the very bad taste in which it is composed, we found ourselves insensibly involved in the perusal, and at times impressed with no common degree of respect for the powers of the author. We have at no time more earnestly desired to extend our voice to a bewildered traveller, than towards this young man, whose taste is so inferior to his powers of imagination and expression, that we never saw a more remarkable instance of genius degraded by the labour in which it is employed. It is the resentment and regret which we experience at witnessing

the abuse of these qualities, as well as the wish to hazard a few remarks upon the romantic novel in general, which has induced us (though we are obliged to go back a little) to offer our criticism on the *Fatal Revenge, or the Family of Montorio.*

It is scarcely possible to abridge the narrative, nor would the attempt be edifying or entertaining. A short abstract of the story is all for which we can afford room. It is introduced in the following striking manner.

"At the siege of Barcelona by the French, in the year 1697, two young officers entered into the service at its most hot and critical period. Their appearance excited some surprise and perplexity. Their melancholy was Spanish, their accent Italian, their names and habits French.

"They distinguished themselves in the service by a kind of careless and desperate courage, that appeared equally insensible of praise or of danger. They forced themselves into all the *coups de main,* the wild and perilous sallies that abound in a spirited siege, and mark it with a greater variety and vivacity of character than a regular campaign. *Here* they were in their element. But among their brother officers, so cold, so distant, so repulsive, that even *they* who loved their courage, or were interested in their melancholy, stood aloof in awkward and hesitating sympathy. Still, though they would not accept the offices of the benevolence their appearance inspired, they were involuntarily always conciliating. Their figures and motions were so eminently noble and striking, their affection for each other so conspicuous, and their youthful melancholy so deep and hopeless, that every one enquired and sought intelligence of them from an impulse stronger than curiosity. Nothing could be learnt; nothing was known, or even conjectured of them.

"During the siege, an Italian officer, of middle age, arrived to assume the command of a post of distinction. His first meeting with these young men was remarkable. They stood speechless and staring at each other for some time. In the mixture of emotions that passed over their countenances, no one predominant or decisive could be traced by the many and anxious witnesses that surrounded them.

"As soon as they separated, the Italian officer was persecuted with enquiries about the strangers. He answered none of them; yet he admitted that he knew circumstances sufficiently extraordinary relating to the young men, who, he said, were natives of Italy.

"A few days after, Barcelona was taken by the French forces. The assault was terrible; the young officers were in the very rage of the fight; they coveted and courted danger; they stood amid showers of grape and ball; they rushed into the heart of crater and explosions; they literally 'wrought in the fire.' The effects of their dreadful courage were foreseen by all; and cries of recall and expostulation sounded around them on every side, in vain.

"On the French taking possession of the town, there was a general demand for the *brothers*. With difficulty the bodies were discovered, and brought with melancholy pomp into the commander's presence. The Italian officer was there; every eye was turned on him."—*Introd.* pp. ix.–xiii.

The history of these mysterious brethren is told by the officer who had recognised them, and runs briefly thus: Orazio, Count of Montorio—for we begin our story with the explanation, which in the original concludes it—possessed of wealth, honours, and ancestry, is married to a beautiful woman, whom he loves doatingly, but of whose affections he is not possessed. A villanous brother instils into his mind jealousy of a cavalier to whom the countess had formerly been attached. Orazio causes the supposed paramour to be murdered in the presence of the lady, who also dies: he then flies from his country with feelings of desperation thus forcibly described:—

"My reason was not suspended, it was totally *changed*. I had become a kind of intellectual savage; a being that, with the malignity and depravation of inferior natures, still retains the reason of a man, and retains it only for his curse. Oh! that midnight darkness of the soul, in which it seeks for something

whose loss has carried away every sense but one of utter and desolate privation; in which it traverses leagues in motion and worlds in thought, without consciousness of relief, yet with a dread of pausing. I had nothing to seek, nothing to recover; the whole world could not restore me an atom, could not show me again a glimpse of what I had been or lost; yet I rushed on as if the next step would reach shelter and peace."—Vol. iii. p. 380.

In this maniac state he reaches an uninhabited islet in the Grecian archipelago, where, from a conversation accidently overheard between two assassins sent by his brother to murder him, the wretched Orazio learns the innocence of his victims, and the full extent of his misery. He contrives to murder his murderers, and the effect of the subsequent discovery upon his feelings is described in a strain of language, which we were alternately tempted to admire as sublime and to reprobate as bombastic.

Orazio determines on revenge, and his plan is diabolically horrid. He resolves to accomplish the murder of his treacherous brother, who, in consequence of his supposed death, had now assumed the honours of the family; and he further determined that this act of vengeance should be perpetrated by the hands of that very brother's own sons, two amiable youths, who had no cloud upon their character, excepting an attachment to mysterious studies, and a strong propensity to superstition.

We do not mean to trace this agent of vengeance through the various devices and stratagems by which he involved in his toils his unsuspecting

nephews, assumed in their apprehension the character of an infernal agent, and decoyed them first to meditate upon, and at length actually to perpetrate, the parricide which was the crown and summit of his wishes. The doctrine of fatalism, on which he principally relied for reconciling his victims to his purpose, is in various passages detailed with much gloomy and terrific eloquence. The rest of his machinery is composed of banditti, caverns, dungeons, inquisitors, trap-doors, ruins, secret-passages, soothsayers, and all the usual accoutrements from the property-room of Mrs Radcliffe. The horror of the piece is completed by the murderer discovering that the youths whom he has taken such pains to involve in parricide are not the sons of his brother, but his own offspring by his unfortunate wife. We do not dwell upon any of these particulars, because the observations which we have to hazard upon this neglected novel apply to a numerous class of the same kind, and because the incidents are such as are to be found in most of them.

In the first place, then, we disapprove of the mode introduced by Mrs Radcliffe, and followed by Mr Murphy and her other imitators, by winding up their story with a solution by which all the incidents, appearing to partake of the mystic and marvellous, are resolved by very simple and natural causes. This seems, to us, to savour of the precaution of Snug the Joiner; or, rather, it is as if the mechanist, when the pantomime was over, should turn his scenes "the seamy side without,"

and expose the mechanical aids by which the delusions were accomplished. In one respect, indeed, it is worse mismanagement; because the understanding spectator might be in some degree gratified by the view of engines which, however rude, were well adapted to produce the effects which he had witnessed. But the machinery of the *Castle of Montorio*, when exhibited, is wholly inadequate to the gigantic operations ascribed to it. There is a total and absolute disproportion between the cause and effect, which must disgust every reader much more than if he were left under the delusion of ascribing the whole to supernatural agency. The latter resource has indeed many disadvantages; some of which we shall briefly notice. But it is an admitted expedient; appeals to the belief of all ages but our own; and still produces, when well managed, some effect even upon those who are most disposed to contemn its influence. We can therefore allow of supernatural agency to a certain extent and for an appropriate purpose, but we never can consent that the effect of such agency shall be finally attributable to natural causes totally inadequate to its production. We can believe, for example, in Macbeth's witches, and tremble at their spells; but had we been informed, in the conclusion of the piece, that they were only three of his wife's chamber-maids disguised for the purpose of imposing on the Thane's credulity, it would have added little to the credibility of the story, and entirely deprived it of the interest. In like manner we fling

back upon the Radcliffe school their flat and ridiculous explanations, and plainly tell them that they must either confine themselves to ordinary and natural events, or find adequate causes for those horrors and mysteries in which they love to involve us. Yet another word on this subject. We know not if a novel writer of the present day expects or desires his labours to be perused oftener than once; but as there may be here and there a maiden aunt in a family, for whose advantage it must be again read over by the young lady who has already devoured it in secret, we advise them to consider how much they suffer from their adherence to this unfortunate system. (We will instance the incident of the black veil in the castle of Udolpho. Attention is excited, and afterwards recalled, by a hundred indirect artifices, to the dreadful and unexplained mystery which the heroine had seen beneath it; and which, after all, proves to be nothing more nor less than a waxen doll.) This trick may indeed for once answer the writer's purpose; and has, we suppose, cost many an extra walk to the circulating library, and many a curse upon the malicious concurrent who always has the fourth volume in hand. But it is as impossible to reperuse the book without feeling the contempt awakened by so pitiful a contrivance as it is for a child to regain its original respect for King Solomon after he has seen the monarch disrobed of all his glory, and deposited in the same box with Punch and his wife. And, in fact, we feel inclined to abuse the author in such a

case as the watch do Harlequin, when they find out his trick of frightening them by mimicking the report of a pistol.

" Faquin, maraud, pendard, impudent, téméraire,
Vous osez nous faire peur ! "

In the second place, we are of opinion that the terrors of this class of novel writers are too accumulated and unremitting. The influence of fear —and here we extend our observations as well to those romances which actually ground it upon supernatural prodigy as to those which attempt a subsequent explanation—is indeed a faithful and legitimate key to unlock every source of fancy and of feeling. Mr Murphy's introduction is expressed with the spirit and animation which, though often misdirected, pervade his whole work.

" I question whether there be a source of emotion in the whole mental frame so powerful or universal as *the fear arising from objects of invisible terror.* Perhaps there is no other that has been, at some period or other of life, the predominant and indelible sensation of every mind, of every class, and under every circumstance. Love, supposed to be the most general of passions, has certainly been felt in its purity by very few, and by some not at all, even in its most indefinite and simple state.

" The same might be said, *à fortiori*, of other passions. But who is there that has never feared? Who is there that has not involuntarily remembered the gossip's tale in solitude or in darkness? Who is there that has not sometimes shivered under an influence he would scarce acknowledge to himself? I might trace this passion to a high and obvious source.

" It is enough for my purpose to assert its existence and prevalency, which will scarcely be disputed by those who remember it. It is absurd to depreciate this passion, and deride its influence. It is *not* the weak and trivial impulse of the nursery, to be forgotten and scorned by manhood. It is the aspiration of a spirit; 'it is the passion of immortals,' that dread and desire of their final habitations." —*Pref.* pp. 4 & 5.

We grant there is much truth in this proposition taken generally. But the finest and deepest feelings are those which are most easily exhausted. The chord which vibrates and sounds at a touch, remains in silent tension under continued pressure. Besides, terror, as Bob Acres says of its counterpart, courage, will come and go; and few people can afford timidity enough for the writer's purpose who is determined on "horrifying" them through three thick volumes. The vivacity of the emotion also depends greatly upon surprise, and surprise cannot be repeatedly excited during the perusal of the same work. It is said respecting the cruel punishment of breaking alive upon the wheel, the sufferer's nerves are so much jarred by the first blow, that he feels comparatively little pain from those which follow. There is something of this in moral feeling; nor do we see a better remedy for it than to recommend the cessation of these experiments upon the public, until their sensibility shall have recovered its original tone. The taste for the marvellous has been indeed compared to the habit of drinking ardent liquors. But it fortunately differs in having its limits: he upon whom one dram does not produce the effect, can attain the desired degree of inebriation by doubling the dose. But when we have ceased to start at one ghost, we are callous to the exhibition of a whole Pandemonium. In short, the sensation is generally as transient as it is powerful, and commonly depends upon some slight circumstances which cannot be repeated.

"The time has been, our senses would have cool'd
To hear a night-shriek; and our fell of hair
Would at a dismal treatise rouse, and stir
As life were in't. We have supped full with horrors;
And direness, now familiar to our thoughts,
Cannot once start us." [*Macbeth, act v. sc.* 5.]

These appear to us the greatest disadvantages under which any author must at present struggle, who chooses supernatural terror for his engine of moving the passions. We dare not call them insurmountable, for how shall we dare to limit the efforts of genius, or shut against its possessor any avenue to the human heart or its passions? Mr Murphy himself, for aught we know, may be destined to show us the prudence of this qualification. He possesses a strong and vigorous fancy, with great command of language. He has indeed regulated his incidents upon those of others, and therefore added to the imperfections which we have pointed out, the want of originality. But his feeling and conception of character are his own, and from these we judge of his powers. In truth, we rose from his strange chaotic novel romance as from a confused and feverish dream, unrefreshed and unamused, yet strongly impressed by many of the ideas which had been so vaguely and wildly presented to our imagination.

It remains to notice the pieces of poetry scattered through these volumes, many of which claim our attention; but we cannot stop to criticise them. There is a wild and desultory elegy, vol. ii. pp. 305–309, which, though not always strictly metrical, has passages of great pathos, as well as fancy. If the author of it be indeed, as he des-

cribes himself, young and inexperienced, without literary friend or counsellor, we earnestly exhort him to seek one on whose taste and judgment he can rely. He is now like an untutored colt, wasting his best vigour in irregular efforts, without either grace or object; but there is much in these volumes which promises a career that may at some future time astonish the public.

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## ARTICLE VII.

### WOMEN; OR. POUR ET CONTRE.

[*Women; or, Pour et Contre: A Tale. By the Author of* BERTRAM, &c. *From the Edinburgh Review, June,* 1818.]

THE author of a successful tragedy has, in the general decay of the dramatic art which marks our age, a good right to assume that distinction in his titlepage, and claim the attention due to superior and acknowledged talent. The faults of *Bertram* are those of an ardent and inexperienced author; but its beauties are undeniably of a high order; and the dramatist who has been successful in exciting pity and terror in audiences assembled to gape and stare at shows and processions, rather than to weep or tremble at the convulsions of human pas-

sion, has a title to the early and respectful attention of the critic.

Mr Maturin, the acknowledged author of *Bertram*, a tragedy, is a clergyman on the Irish establishment, employed chiefly, if we mistake not, in the honourable task of assisting young persons during their classical studies at Trinity College, Dublin. He has been already a wanderer in the field of fiction, and is the author of the *House of Montorio*, a romance in the style of Mrs Radcliffe, the *Wild Irish Boy*, and other tales.[1] The present work is framed upon a different and more interesting model, pretending to the merit of describing the emotions of the human heart, rather than that of astonishing the reader by the accumulation of imaginary horrors, or the singular combinations of marvellous and perilous adventures. Accordingly, we think we can perceive marks of greater care than Mr Maturin has taken the trouble to bestow upon his former works of fiction; and that which is a favourite with the author himself, is certainly most likely to become so with the

[1] [The Rev. Charles Robert Maturin, curate of St Peter's, Dublin, an eccentric character, but a man of genius, shared the usual fate of irregular and incoherent genius, in a continued family warfare, with "elegant desires," poverty, and bailiffs. He died in October, 1824. Besides the present and preceding articles of review, Mr Maturin published tales, called, *The Milesian Chief*, 4 vols.; *The Wild Irish Boy*, 3 vols.; *Melmoth the Wanderer*, 4 vols.; and *The Albigenses*, 4 vols.; two Tragedies—*Bertram*, and *Manuel; The Universe, a Poem;* and two volumes of sermons. Among other fantastic humours of this gentleman, it is said that when he wished his family to be aware that *the fit* was on him, he used to stick a wafer on his forehead.]

public and with the critic. Upon his former works, the author has, in his preface, passed the following severe sentence.

"None of my former prose works have been popular. The strongest proof of which is, none of them arrived at a second edition; nor could I dispose of the copyright of any but of the *Milesian*, which was sold to Mr Colburn for L.80, in the year 1811.

"*Montorio* (misnomed by the bookseller *The Fatal Revenge*, a very bookselling appellation) had some share of popularity, but it was only the popularity of circulating libraries: it deserved no better; the date of that style of writing was out when I was a boy, and I had not powers to revive it. When I look over those books now, I am not at all surprised at their failure; for, independent of their want of *external* interest (the strongest interest that books can have, even in this reading age), they seem to me to want *reality*, vraisemblance; the characters, situations, and language are drawn merely from imagination; my limited acquaintance with life denied me any other resource. In the tale which I now offer to the public, perhaps there may be recognised some characters which experience will not disown. Some resemblance to common life may be traced in them. On this I rest for the most part the interest of the narrative. The paucity of characters and incidents (the absence of all that constitutes the interest of fictitious biography in general) excludes the hope of this work possessing any other interest."

The preface concludes with an assurance, that the author will never trespass again in this kind;—a promise or threat which is as often made and as often broken as lovers' vows, and which the reader has no reason to desire should in the present case be more scrupulously adhered to, than by other authors of ancient and modern celebrity. Let us only see, what the work really deserves, a favourable reception from the public; and we trust Mr Maturin may be moved once more to resume a

species of composition so easy to a writer of rich fancy and ready powers, so delightful to the numerous class of readers, who have Gray's authority for supposing it no bad emblem of paradise to lie all day on a couch and read new novels.

In analyzing *Women*, we are tempted to hesitate which end of the tale we should begin with. It is the business of the author to wrap up his narrative in mystery during its progress, to withdraw the veil from his mystery with caution, and inch as it were by inch, and to protract as long as possible the trying crisis "when any reader of common sagacity may foresee the inevitable conclusion;" a period after which neither interest of dialogue nor splendour of description, neither marriage dresses, nor settlement of estates, can protract the attention of the thorough-bred novel reader. The critic has an interest the very reverse of this. It is his business to make all things brief and plain to the most ordinary comprehension. He is a matter-of-fact sort of person, who, studious only to be brief and intelligible, commences with the commencement, according to the instructions of the giant Moulineau, "que tous ces recits qui commencent par le milieu ne font qu'embrouiller l'imagination." It is very true, that, in thus exercising our privilege, the author has something to complain of. We turn his wit the seamy side without, explain all his machinery, and the principles on which it moves before he causes it to play; and, like the persecution which the petty jealousy of his great neighbours at Hagley exercised on poor

Shenstone, it seems as if we perversely conducted our readers to inconvenient points of view, and introduced them at the wrong end of a walk to detect a deception. Of such injuries, according to Johnson, the bard of the Leasowes was wont to complain heavily; and perhaps Mr Maturin may be equally offended with us for placing the conclusion of his book at the beginning of our recital. But "let the stricken deer go weep;"—the cook would have more than enough to do, who thought it necessary to consult the eel at which extremity he would like the flaying to begin.

There was then once upon a time, in a remote province of Ireland, a certain man of wealth and wickedness, who combined the theory of infidelity with the practice of the most unbounded libertinism. By one of his mistresses, a female of a wild and enthusiastic character, who, though she had sacrificed her virtue, retained the most bigoted attachment to the Catholic religion, this person had a beautiful and gifted daughter. The unfortunate mother, sensible of the dangers which the child must incur under the paternal roof, was detected in an attempt to remove it elsewhere, and driven by violence from the house of her paramour; not, however, before she had poured upon him and his innocent offspring, a curse the most solemn, bitter and wild that ever passed the lips of a human being. The daughter was bred up in the midst of luxury, and sedulously instructed in all that could improve an excellent understanding, by teachers of every language, and masters of every art. At the

early age of fifteen, her chief instructor was an artful and accomplished Italian, who abused his trust, and seduced his pupil into a private marriage. A female child was the consequence of this union, and occasioned its being discovered. The father was inexorable, and drove the daughter from his presence; while the sordid husband, disappointed in his avaricious views, tore the child from the mother, returned it upon the hands of his relentless patron, carried off his wife to Italy; and turned to profit her brilliant talents of every kind, as an actress upon the public stage, where she became the most distinguished performer by whom it had ever been trod. The selfish husband, or rather tyrant, by whose instructions she had been taught to attain this eminence, died at length, when she had obtained the zenith of her reputation, and left Zaira under the assumed title of Madame Dalmatiani, mistress of her own destiny.

About this period her daughter had attained the age of fifteen years. The infidel grandfather had put her, while an infant, under the charge of an excellent woman, the wife of a wealthy banker. Both professed evangelical doctrines, or what is technically called Calvinistic Methodism. Eva was bred up in the same tenets, shared their religious, gloomy, and sequestered life, and passed for the niece of Mr and Mrs Wentworth. The grandfather made large remittances, which reconciled the banker to this adoption; the heart of his more amiable wife was won by the beauty and engaging disposition of her youthful ward.

A danger, however, hovered over Eva, from the superstitious and frantic obstinacy of her grandmother, who, as Zaira was beyond her reach, had transferred to Eva the anxious and unhesitating zeal with which she laboured to make acquisition of the souls of her descendants for the benefit of the Catholic Church. Reduced by choice more than necessity to the situation of a wandering beggar, this woman retained, it seems, amid her insanity, the power of laying schemes of violence; and, amongst her rags, possessed the means of carrying them into execution. She contrived forcibly to carry off her grand-daughter Eva, and to place her in a carriage, which was to transport her to an obscure hut in the vicinity of Dublin.

These events compose the underground or basement story of the narrative, to which the author introduces his company last of all, although we have thought proper to show its secret recesses, and the machinery which they contain, before examining the superstructure.

Without a metaphor the novel thus commences. De Courcy, a youth of large property, of talents and of virtue, fair and graceful in person, and cultivated in taste and understanding, but of a disposition at once fickle and susceptible, appears as the hero of the tale. In his seventeenth year, he is about to enter himself a student in Christ-Church College. The breaking down of a carriage had rendered him a pedestrian; and as he made his approach to the capital of Ireland through the shades of a delightful summer night, the chaise

passes him, in which ruffians, hired as we have seen by no desperate admirer, as is usual on such occasions, but by her old frantic grandmother, are in the act of transporting Eva into the power of that person. To hear the cry of a female in distress, and to pursue the ravishers, although upon foot, was one and the same thing. An interesting and animated account of the chase is given, rendered more true by the knowledge of the localities exhibited by the author. De Courcy, losing and recovering the object of his pursuit as the carriage outstrips him in speed or is delayed by accident, follows them through the Phœnix park, and along the road to Chapel-Izod. Here, in a miserable cottage, he lights at last upon the object of his pursuit, in the keeping of the old hag by whose accomplices she had been carried off, and who, while they were absent about the necessary repairs of some damage sustained by the carriage, awaited their return to carry her to some place of greater security. She is thus forcibly described.

"Charles, who knew not what to answer, advanced; a woman then started forward from a dark corner, and stood wildly before him, as if wishing to oppose him, she knew not how. She was a frightful and almost supernatural object; her figure was low, and she was evidently very old; but her muscular strength and activity were so great, that, combined with the fantastic wildness of her motions, it gave them the appearance of the gambols of a hideous fairy. She was in rags; yet their arrangement had something of a picturesque effect. Her short tattered petticoats, of all colours and of various lengths, depending in angular shreds, her red cloak hanging on her back, and displaying her bare bony arms, with hands whose veins were like ropes, and fingers like talons; her naked feet, with which, when she moved, she stamped, jumped, and beat the earth like an Indian squaw in a war dance;

her face *tattooed* with the deepest indentings of time, want, wretchedness, and evil passions; her wrinkles, that looked like channels of streams long flowed away; the eager motion with which she shook back her long matted hair, that looked like strings of the grey bark of the ash-tree, while eyes flashed through them whose light seemed the posthumous offspring of deceased humanity,—her whole appearance, gestures, voice, and dress, made De Courcy's blood run cold within him. They gazed on each other for some time, as if trying to make out each other's purpose, from faces dimly seen, till the woman, whose features seemed kindling by the red light into a fiend-like glare, appeared to discover that he was not the person whom she expected, and cried, in a voice at once shrill and hollow, like a spent blast, 'What is it brought you here?'—and, before he could answer, rushing forward, stood with her back against a door (which but for this motion he would not have observed), and waving her lean nervous arms, exclaimed fiercely, 'Come no farther at your peril!'"—Vol. i. 15–17.

The threats of this demoniacal personage were insufficient to deter De Courcy from forcing his way to the interior of the hut, where he beheld a beautiful, but almost inanimate form, lie stretched on a wretched pallet. Upon De Courcy's attempt to remove her, the frantic guardian again breaks into a transport of rage, which, however, does not prevent him from accomplishing his purpose amid the dire curses which she heaped upon him, and which are expressed in a tone of energy which marks the dialogue of this author.

"Take her, take her from me if you will, but take my curse with you; it will be heavier on your heart than her weight is on your arm. I never cursed the grass but it withered, or the sky but it grew dark, or the living creatures but they pined and wasted away. Now you bear her away like a corpse in your arms; and I see you following her corpse to the churchyard, and the white ribbons tying her shroud; her maiden name on her tomb-stone; no child to cry for her, and you that sent her to her grave wishing it was dug for you."—Vol. i. p. 24.

Unappalled by these denunciations of future vengeance, De Courcy conveyed Eva in his arms to a place of safety, and found the means of restoring her to her guardians the Wentworths. The seeds of a fever which had lurked in his constitution had been called into action by De Courcy's exertions upon this memorable night. On his recovery, a friend and fellow-student, himself something of a Methodist, conducts him to a place of worship frequented by those who held that persuasion, when he finds himself unexpectedly seated close to that lovely vision which he had seen but briefly on the night when he released her, and which had nevertheless haunted, ever since, not merely the delirious dreams of his fever, but the more sober moments of his reconvalescence. He is invited to the house of her guardians, where the society and conversation is described with the pencil of a master. The various effect of the peculiar doctrines which they professed, is described as they affected Mrs Wentworth, a woman of strong sense, rigid rectitude, and a natural warmth of temper which religion had subdued; her husband, a cold-hearted Pharisee, whose head was so full of theology, that his heart had no room for Christian charity or human feeling; and Mr Macowen, a preacher of the sect, a sensual hypocrite, whose disgusting attributes are something too forcibly described. The conversation of such a society was limited to evangelical subjects; or whatever appeared to diverge from the only tolerated topic, was brought back to it by main force, according to the manner

in which the preachers of the seventeenth century spiritualized all temporal incidents and occupations, or rather degraded doctrines of the highest and most reverent import, by the base comparisons and associations with which they dared to interweave them.

'One man talked incessantly of the 'election of grace;' his mind literally seemed not to have room for another idea; every sentence, if it did not begin, ended with the same phrase, and every subject only furnished matter for its introduction. Dr Thorpe's last sermon at Bethesda was spoken of in terms of high and merited panegyric.—'Very true,' said he; 'but—a—Did you think there was enough of election in it?' A late work of the same author (his clever pamphlet on the Catholic petition) was mentioned.—'But does he say any thing of election in it?'—'There was no opportunity,' said Mr Wentworth.—'Then he should have made one—Ah, I would give very little for a book that did not assert the election of grace!' Once seated in his election-saddle, he posted on with alarming speed, and ended with declaring, that Elisha Coles on God's Sovereignty, was worth all the divinity that ever was written. 'I have a large collection of the works of godly writers,' said he, turning to De Courcy, 'but not one work that ever was, would I resign for that of Elisha Coles.'—'Won't you except the Bible?' said De Courcy, smiling.—'Oh, yes—the Bible—ay, to be sure, the Bible,' said the discomfited champion of election; 'but still, you know,'—and he continued to mutter something about Elisha Coles on God's Sovereignty.

"Another, who never stopped talking, appeared to De Courcy a complete evangelical *time-keeper*;—the same ceaseless ticking sound;—the same vacillating motion of the head and body; and his whole conversation turning on the various lengths of the sermons he had heard, of which it appeared, he was in the habit of listening to four every Sunday. 'Mr Matthias preached exactly forty-eight minutes. I was at Mr Cooper's exhortation at Plunket-street in the evening, and it was precisely fifty-three minutes.'—'And how many seconds?' said Mrs Wentworth, smiling—for she felt the ridicule of this.

"Close to De Courcy were two very young men, who were

comparing the respective progress they had made in the conversion of some of their relations. They spoke on this subject with a familiarity that certainly made De Courcy start.—'My aunt is almost entirely converted,' said one. 'She never goes to church now, though she never missed early prayers at St Thomas's for forty years before. Now,' with a strange sort of triumph, 'now, is your sister converted, as much as that?'—'Yes—yes—she is.' answered the other, eagerly; 'for she burned her week's preparation yesterday, and my mother's too along with it.'"—Vol. i. 64–67.

De Courcy in vain attempted to assimilate his conversation to that of the party, by quoting such religious works as were known to him. The chilling words "Arminian" or "heterodox" were applied to those popular preachers whose sermons he ventured to quote; and even Cœlebs was appealed to without effect, as he was given to understand that Hannah More, however apostolical in the eyes of Lord Orford, was held light in the estimation of the present system. Thus repulsed from the society of the gentlemen—

"When he arrived in the drawingroom, the same monotonous and repulsive stillness; the same dry circle (in whose verge no spirit could be raised) reduced him to the same petrifying medium with all around. The females were collected round the tea-table; the conversation was carried on in pensive whispers; a large table near them was spread with evangelical tracts, &c. The room was hung with dark-brown paper; and the four unsnuffed candles burning dimly (the light of two of them almost absorbed in the dark baize that covered the table on which they stood), gave just the light that Young might have written by, when the Duke of Grafton sent him a human skull, with a taper in it, as an appropriate candelabrum for his tragedy writing-desk. The ladies sometimes took up these tracts, shook a head of deep conviction over their contents, laid them down, and the same stillness recurred. The very hissing of the tea-urn, and the crackling of the coals, was a relief to De Courcy's ears."—Vol. i. 69, 70.

Notwithstanding the gloom and spiritual pride in which she had been educated, the beauty and sweet disposition of Eva burned with pure and pale splendour, like a lamp in a sepulchre; and De Courcy nourished for her that desperate attachment with which youths of seventeen resign themselves to the first impression of the tender passion. He becomes in love—to pining, to sickness, almost to death; and at length prevails upon his worthy and affectionate guardian to make proposals for him to the guardians of Eva. Mr and Mrs Wentworth both urge the utter impropriety of their countenancing a connexion between young persons so opposite in religious opinions; but are gradually compelled to give ground,—the former by consideration of De Courcy's worldly wealth, to which his religious opinions had not rendered him indifferent,—and his more amiable wife, by her compassion for the state of the young Eva, and her discovering that he had awakened sentiments in the breast of Eva corresponding to his own.

De Courcy is therefore received, on the footing of an acknowledged lover, into the house of the Wentworths, exposed, however, to the persecutions of the father and many of his visiters, who were resolved at all rates to achieve his conversion.

"Charles at first yielded from timidity, or answered from complaisance, but at length found himself, by the pertinacity of the disputants, inextricably involved in the mazes of controversy. Every hour he was called on to discuss or to decide on points above human comprehension; he was pressed with importunities about his spiritual state, which was represented to depend on his adopting the separate creed of every individual speaker, with

all its divisions and subdivisions, and shades of difference, that seemed to him to give to airy nothing 'a local habitation and a name.'"—P. 117.

Even when he turned from this persecution to Eva, he did not all times find the relief which he expected. Her purity, her inexperience, her timidity, and the absolute subjection of her mind to religious feeling exclusively, prevented her from understanding or returning the warmth of affection with which her lover regarded her. She was cold and constrained; blamed herself for the slightest deviation into worldly passion and human feeling —in short, the person in the world least qualified to return the affection of an enthusiastic young Irishman. Her accomplishments were upon the same narrow and constrained scale as her feelings. She could discourse exquisite music, but not one earthly song; and the warm expressions of human passion which occurred in her evangelical hymns were only addressed to the Deity with an amorous pastoral feeling, which seemed to her lover equally unsuitable and nonsensical. Again, Eva, in her little sphere of enjoyments, cultivated drawing; but it was only that of flowers,—objects as pure, as fair, and as inanimate, we had almost said, as herself. To feelings of imagination and passion, she was equally averse and impassive; and such appeared to be the tranquil purity of her still and orderly existence, that De Courcy felt it almost criminal to strive to awaken her imagination, "to delude her with the visions of fancy;" and that it resembled the attempt of the fallen angels in Milton to "min-

gle strange fire" with the lights of heaven. He did his best, however, and called in the aid of ancient and modern bards to enable him to dispute the too exclusive empire of heaven in her bosom.

"'Why are you so silent, Eva?' he said, as they returned from the conventicle which the Wentworths frequented.—'I was thinking of that fine text.'—'What was it?'—'What was it?' said Eva, almost relinquishing his arm, from a feeling stronger and more unpleasant than surprise, for she had no idea of any one forgetting the text so soon.—'I have a bad memory—or a bad headach,' said De Courcy, trying to smile away her amazement—'or, perhaps, I would rather hear it from your lips than those of that dark-browed sallow man.'—'It is little matter,' said Eva, 'from what lips we hear the truth. The text was, God is Love.'"—'Oh, Eva!' said De Courcy, under an impulse he could not resist, 'do we require any thing more than this dark-blue sky, this balmy air, those lovely stars that glitter like islands of light in an immeasurable ocean, and point out our destination amid its bright and boundless infinity, to tell us that 'God is Love?' Why must we learn it in the close and heated air of a conventicle, with all its repulsive accompaniments of gloomy looks, sombre habits, dim lights, nasal hymns? Are these the interpreters the Deity employs as the intimations of his love?'—'They are,' said Eva, awakened to an answer, but never thus awakened for more than a moment—'they are. For to the poor the gospel is preached, and they seldom feel any thing of the atmosphere but its inclemency,—to the sick, and they cannot encounter it,—to the unhappy, and they cannot enjoy it.'"—P. 142–144.

It was scarce possible that this conflict should have long continued, without the lover becoming colder, and more sensible to the various disagreeable points of his situation, or the beloved condescending to descend a few steps towards earth from the point of quietism which she occupied. De Courcy began to relax. Ball-rooms, billiard-tables, and theatres disputed the charms even of Eva's

society, since he could only enjoy it in the gloomy conventicle, or scarce less gloomy mansion of the Wentworths; and then, alternately repulsed by her coldness, and exasperated by the officious zeal of Wentworth, or the more studied insults of Macowen, who looked upon his addresses to Eva as an interference with his own views. At the moment when the irreconcilable difference between his sentiments and habits, and those of all in Dominic Street, became less capable of disguise, and just as the good man Wentworth was triumphing in an approaching controversy, in which a Socinian, a Catholic, an Arian, and an Arminian were, in knightly phrase, to keep the barriers against twelve resolute Catholics, De Courcy discovers in the papers the arrival of Madame Dalmatiani, the first singer, as well as the first tragic actress in Europe. This lady was pronounced, by the general report of Europe, to be a Siddons, a Catalani, a La Tiranna, with all the terrible Medea graces, all the Muses in short, and all the Graces embodied in the form of a female of exquisite beauty. To De Courcy's ill-timed eulogium on this celebrated performer, Wentworth answered in a strain of triumph. "Every histriomastrix, from Tertullian down to Prynne and Collier, might have been raised from the dead with joy. He cursed stages, stage-plays stage-players, frequenters and abettors, from Thespis down to Mr Harris and the committee of Drury-Lane, lamp-lighters, scene-shifters, and candle-snuffers inclusive, not forgetting a by-blow at De Courcy for visiting those *tents of Kedar*." The

votary of the drama and its abominator parted in mutual wrath, and De Courcy had an additional motive, besides those of curiosity and interest, to go to the theatre: he desired to show his independence, and his sense of Wentworth's illiberal prejudices.

To the theatre, accordingly, he went, and the appearance and effect produced by this celebrated actress, is thus vividly described.

"A brilliant audience, lights, music, and the murmur of delighted expectation, prepared Charles for a far different object from Eva. What a contrast, in the very introduction, between the dark habits, pale lights, solemn music, and awful language of a conventicle, and the gaiety and splendour of a theatre! He felt already disposed to look with delight on one who was so brightly harbingered, though it was amid a scene so different his first impressions of passion had been received and felt. The curtain rose: and, in a few moments after, Madame Dalmatiani entered. She rushed so rapidly on the stage, and burst with such an overwhelming cataract of sound on the ear, in a bravura that seemed composed apparently not to task, but to defy the human voice, that all eyes were dazzled, and all ears stunned; and several minutes elapsed before a thunder of applause testified the astonishment from which the audience appeared scarcely then to respire. She was in the character of a princess, alternately reproaching and supplicating a tyrant for the fate of her lover; and such was her perfect self-possession, or rather the force with which she entered into the character, that she no more noticed the applauses that thundered round her, than if she had been the individual she represented; and such was the illusion of her figure, her costume, her voice, and her attitudes, that in a few moments the inspiration with which she was agitated was communicated to every spectator. The sublime and sculpture-like perfection of her form—the classical, yet unstudied undulation of her attitudes, almost conveying the idea of a sybil or a prophetess under the force of ancient inspiration—the resplendent and almost overpowering lustre of her beauty, her sun-like eyes, her snowy arms, her drapery blazing with diamonds, yet falling round her figure in folds as light as if the zephyrs had flung it there, and delighted

to sport among its wavings; her imperial loveliness, at once attractive and commanding, and her voice developing all that nature could give, or art could teach, maddening the ignorant with the discovery of a new sense, and daring the scientific beyond the bounds of expectation or of experience—mocking their amazement, and leaving the ear breathless—All these burst at once on Charles, whose heart, and senses, and mind, reeled in intoxication, and felt pleasure annihilated by its own excess.

"It was for the last scene she had reserved her powers—those astonishing powers that could blend the most exquisite tones of melody with the fiercest agitations of passion, that could delight the ear, while they shook the soul. She came forward, after having stabbed the tyrant to avenge the fate of her lover. Her dress was deranged—her long black hair floated on her shoulders—the flowers and diamonds that bound it were flung back—and her bare arms, her dark fixed eyes, the unconscious look with which she grasped the dagger, and the unfelt motion with which from time to time she raised her hand to wipe off the trace of blood from her pale forehead, made the spectators almost tremble for the next victim of one who seemed armed with the beauty, the passions, and the terrors of an avenging goddess. Applauses that shook the house had marked every scene but the last. When the curtain dropt, a dead silence pervaded the whole theatre, and a deep sigh proclaimed relief from oppression no longer supportable."—Vol. i. p. 160–164.

It cannot have escaped the intelligent reader, that this superb Queen of terror and sorrow, this mistress of all the movements of the human heart, is the highly accomplished, brilliant, and fascinating Zaira, the mother of the simple, retired, and evangelical Eva; and it can as little escape his penetration, that she is about to become the unconscious rival of her unfortunate child, in the affections of the fickle De Courcy. The death of her wretched husband had left Zaira possessed of the wealth which her talents had acquired, and she was now come to Ireland, with the hope of obtaining from her father, some lights concerning the

destiny of her infant child. By his stern injunction, she retained her borrowed name and public character.

De Courcy had a nominal guardian, a silly man of fortune, called Sir Richard Longwood, whose silly wife had presented him with two daughters whom we must pronounce rather too silly for the rank which they are represented as holding in good society. At the house and the parties of Lady Longwood, De Courcy is thrown into the society of Zaira, rendered doubly dangerous by her various talents and extent of cultivation, as well as her brilliancy of taste, feeling, mind, and manners, forming so strong a contrast with the uniform simplicity and limited character of poor Eva. Yet it was Eva whom he visited after the first evening spent in the fascinating society of Zaira, ere yet he paid his respects to the syren whose image had begun to eclipse her in his bosom.

"Eva and her aunt were at work; the room was large; the dark-brown paper, two candles dimly burning on the work table, the silent quiet figures that sat beside it, the shelves loaded with volumes of divinity, the still sombrous air of every thing; no musical instrument, no flowers, no paintings; what a contrast to the scene he had last witnessed, and to the scene he was hastening to!"—P. 199.

Here he asked for books, and had his choice of *Sandeman's Letters*, *Boston's Fourfold State*, *Gill on Isaiah*, or *Owen on the Hebrews*. Milton was the only author of genius permitted to hold a place on these well-purged shelves. Milton, De Courcy began to read, but was soon silenced by Mrs Wentworth's severe remarks on the lapse of that great

poet into the tenets of Baxterianism. The dulness of the party was disturbed, not enlivened, by the arrival of old Wentworth, full primed for controversy, and his pockets stuffed with evangelical pamphlets. His violence and prejudices again hurry the fickle lover to the house of Madame Dalmatiani, where all was light and music, garlands and colours, beauty and genius. The mistress passed through apartments filled with groupes of the gay and the learned, where speech was without effort, and silence without *ennui;* where rare volumes, rich ornaments, classical statues and pictures, as well as the number of the attendants and splendour of the establishment, showed that the proprietor was the favourite of fortune, as well as of nature. But her own presence was the principal charm. Her beauty, her musical talents, her taste, were alternately taxed for their share of the festival. She conversed with the various professors of the arts of poetry and of general literature, in a style various, as suited their different pursuits, like Cleopatra, giving audience to each ambassador at her court in his own native language.

A friend, by name Montgomery, the same who first conducted De Courcy to a methodist meeting-house, and who himself nourished a hopeless, but most generous passion for Eva, saw with alarm, that De Courcy preferred the dangerous mansion of Madame Dalmatiani, and endeavoured, more zealously than wisely, to reclaim the wanderer. What had Dominic Street to present, that could be opposed to Zaira's palace of enchanted enjoy-

gled brogues, their dirt, and all else that was unpleasing to the sense and the imagination, rendered the task even of clothing the naked, and instructing the ignorant and fatherless, disgusting in the eyes of a delicate and somewhat selfish lover of the fine arts.

These and similar scenes of contrast succeed to each other with great effect; and the feeble and vacillating mind of De Courcy is alternately agitated by returning affection for Eva, aided by compassion and by a sense of the cruelty and dishonour of deserting her, and by the superior force of character of her more accomplished rival. It becomes daily more and more plain, that the weaker feeling must give way to that which was more strong and energetic, especially when Zaira, after one or two trying interviews, agrees to banish the name of love from their intimacy, and to term it only an intimate friendship, resolves herself to adopt the task of preceptress to the bride of De Courcy, and transfer to her those accomplishments which too visibly enchanted the heart of her susceptible friend. This specious arrangement is well ridiculed by Zaira's correspondent, a French lady of fashion, having all the frivolity, the good nature, the tact and perception of character proper to one who filled a high place in the Parisian *beau monde;* and Zaira's eyes become opened to the real state of her affections. Mean while, the continued operation of contrast alienates De Courcy still further from the gentle Eva, and attaches him more firmly to her brilliant rival. A thunder-storm frightens Eva

into a state of insensibility. Another thunder-storm surprising a party of pleasure, amid the romantic scenery of the Wicklow mountains, gives Zaira the opportunity of exhibiting courage at once heroic and philosophical. All circumstances combine to show that De Courcy's hastily formed engagement with Eva will not and cannot come to a good issue. The fiendish hag from whose power De Courcy had delivered her, appears upon the scene, again and again crossing the stage like an evil-presaging apparition. One of the most frightful of these appearances takes place during a great fire in Dublin, to the progress of which Zaira and De Courcy are witnesses. The scene is described with much terrible grandeur.

"All was life, though it was the hour of repose; and all was light, terrible light, though the sky was as dark as December midnight. They attempted to ascend Cork-hill; that was rendered impossible by the crowd; and winding another way through lanes, of which the reader may be spared the names, they got into Fishamble street. Many fearful intimations of the danger struck them there.—The hollow rolling of the fire-engines, so distinct in their sound;—the cries of 'clear the way,' from the crowd, who opened their dense tumultuous mass for the passage, and instantly closed again;—the trampling of the cavalry on the wet pavement, threatening, backing, facing among the crowd;—the terrible hollow knocking on the pavement, to break open the pipes for water, which was but imperfectly supplied;—the bells of all the neighbouring churches, St John's, St Werburgh's, St Bride's, and the deep tremendous toll of Christ-church, mingled with, but heard above all, as if it summoned the sufferers to prepare, not for life but for death, and poured a kind of defiance on the very efforts it was rung to invite them to. All this came at once on them, as they entered Fishamble street, from a wretched lane through which they had been feeling their way. They emerged from it; *and when they did*, the horrors of the conflagration burst on them at once. The fire, confined in the

sphere of its action, amidst warehouses thickly enclosed, burst in terrible volumes above the tops of the houses, and seemed like a volcano, of which no one could see the crater.

"On the steps of St John's Church, a number were collected. They had snatched the furniture from their miserable lodgings; piled it up in the street, where the guard were watching it, and now sat patiently in the open air to see their habitations reduced to ashes, unknowing where they were to rest their heads that night.

"All the buildings in the neighbourhood were strongly illuminated by the fire, and still more strongly (though partially from time to time) by lights held out by the inhabitants from their windows, from the shops to the attics, six stories high; and the groupes below flashing out in the light, and disappearing in the darkness, their upturned faces, marked with the shifting traces of fear, horror, defiance, and despair, presented a subject for Salvator. No banditti, in the darkest woods of the Apennines, illuminated only by lightning, ever showed more fearful wildness of expression, or more picturesque distortion of attitude. Just then the flames sunk for a moment, but, rising again, instantly poured forth a volume of light, that set the whole horizon in a blaze. There was a shriek from the crowd, that seemed rather like the cry of triumph than despair. It is certain, that a people like the Irish, whose imagination is stronger than any other of their intellectual faculties, can utter cries of delight at the sight of a splendid conflagration that is consuming their dwellings.

"The last burst of flames produced a singular effect. The buildings in Castle street (below the range of the illumination) lay in complete darkness—darkness more intense from the surrounding light, and the tower and spire of St Werburgh's, it had *then* a fantastically elegant spire), by their height in the horizon, caught the whole effect of the fire, and appeared like a fairy palace of flame, blazing and built among the clouds."—Vol. ii. pp. 101–105.

Amidst this scene of horror and sublimity, rushes forth the beggar maniac, bursting through the crowd with irresistible force, and planting herself opposite to Zaira.

"She was, as usual, in rags, and as the strong light gleamed on her hoary streaming hair, her wild features, and her wilder

attire, she seemed fit to act the prompting and exulting fury who stood by Nero when he surveyed from his tower Rome in flames, which his own orders had kindled, and which his own orders (it is said) forbid to be extinguished. She began her usual wild dance, regardless of the crowd, and of the terrible cause of their assembling, and mingled, from time to time, exclamations in a voice between recitative and singing, that seemed modulated to the music of invisible and infernal spirits. It was very singular of this woman, that though her accent was perfectly Irish, her expressions were not so; her individual feeling seemed to swallow up and overwhelm her nationality. Wherever she was, she seemed perfectly alone—alone alike amid the mountains of Wicklow or the multitudes of Dublin; all times, circumstances, and persons seemed to yield to the single, mysterious, undefinable feeling that always governed and inspired her; and while it made her an object of supreme terror to all others, made all others objects of supreme contempt to her."—Vol. ii. pp. 107, 108.

As she attempted to seize upon Zaira, of whose individuality she retained some imperfect recollection, she was forced back by De Courcy.

"'Have you no touch of nature in ye?' said the woman, suddenly and fearfully altering her tone, and clinging close and closer to Zaira. 'Do you know who (*whom*) it is you drive away?—Have ye no touch of nature in ye?—Oh, these hands are withered, but how often they have clasped you round that white neck!—Oh, these hairs are grey, but how often have you played with them when they were as black and as bright as your own!—Sorrow for you has turned them white. Oh, look upon me,—look upon me on my knees. I don't know *your name now*, but you should never have forgot mine. Oh, have ye no nature in you, and I kneeling on the cold stones *before my own!*'"—Vol. ii. pp. 112, 113.

These ominous curses were prophetic. The departure of Zaira for the Continent brought De Courcy's apostasy to a crisis. Her father having died suddenly, deprived her of every clue, as she thought, to discover where her child existed; and the discovery of how far her affections were like to

hurry her, was another motive for her departure. She saw De Courcy once more, however, and the result of their interview was, his obtaining permission to attend her to the Continent on the footing of a companion, who, at the expiry of a twelvemonth, might claim possession of her hand. There is a letter of the deserted and heart-broken Eva to her faithless lover, which abounds with touches of beautiful and natural feeling. She thanked him for the wholesome cruelty which had restored to heaven a heart which, for his sake, had begun to love the world. She forgave him, and concluded with this pathetic prophecy.

"You will return in spring; in spring, you will be back with your triumphant beautiful bride: perhaps you will visit this room from some lingering feeling; you will see the flowers, the books, the music you once loved, all in their place, where you formerly wished to see them; and perhaps you will ask, where am *I*.—'I came,' says the eastern tale you told me, 'to the tombs of my friends, and asked where are they? and echo answered, *Where?*'"—Vol. ii. p. 276.

In the hope of rendering her juvenile lover all that was worthy, as she already accounted him all that was amiable, Zaira had yielded to the culpable weakness of becoming accessory to his breach of promise. She had not doubted that she could attach him to her by the double charms of beauty and talent, added to those of superior intellect. But Paris—that Paris in which even the lover of the Princess of Babylon became disloyal—was doomed to prove the vanity of her expectations.

The fidelity of a man is like the virtue of a female when it has succumbed in one temptation,—the

sense of fine feeling is lost, and it seldom resists another. Yet, we are far from thinking the second defection of Charles de Courcy, amiable and generous as he is painted, as half so probably *motived* as his first offence against the code of constancy. His desertion of the simple and narrow-minded Eva for a woman of such brilliant talent and powers as Zaira, while it was highly blameworthy, is but too probable an occurrence. But that, unsated by possession, and witnessing the prodigious effects produced by Zaira's talents on all that was brave and illustrious in Europe, and which was then (in 1814) assembled in Paris, he should have wantonly deserted the sacred object of his affections, and preferred to her, for ever so short a space, a certain Eulalie de Terranges, so inferior to her in all respects, exceeds every extended limit of indulgence which we can allow to a susceptible and fickle disposition, fixes upon Mr Maturin's hero the odious character of a male coquette, and makes us almost identify a character so effeminate with that ascribed by the satirist to a countryman of De Courcy's—

> "A motley figure of the Fribble tribe,
> Which heart can scarce conceive or pen describe,
> Nor male nor female neither, and yet both,
> Of neuter gender, though of Irish growth,
> A six foot suckling, mincing in its gait,
> Affected, peevish, prim, and delicate."

Lest we should appear, however, to have judged too harshly of De Courcy, we will briefly recapitulate the various motives alleged for his a second time breaking the most solemn ties that a man can

form, and deserting Zaira in Paris, as he had deserted Eva in Dublin. The blaze of Zaira's mental superiority seems to have become too scorching for De Courcy to bear, when he was no longer screened by the opportunity of retiring to contrast its brilliancy with the more calm moonlight character of Eva. She had pretensions, besides, to guide and to instruct him; and no man cares to be guided and instructed by a woman. Moreover, in the opinion of an experienced Frenchman, Zaira was *trop exigeante*, too determined to dazzle and to delight, and to inspire every moment with rapture of one description or another. "Pleasure itself, so protracted," says this connoisseur, "so exaggerated, must become pain. It is like the punishment of Regulus, cutting off the eyelids to turn the light of the sun into torture." Besides, there was the dissipation of Parisian society, and the shame of being seen one of the train of an actress—he a gentleman of fortune and birth; and there was the discovery, that Zaira had been a wife and a mother, which she had imprudently left him to receive from others; and there was a letter of expostulation from his kind guardian, conjuring him to avoid a disgraceful alliance, and not to suffer himself to be trailed over the Continent, the overgrown pupil of a female pedagogue. Lastly, there was a natural love of change, and some regret after the discarded Eva. If all these reasons cannot palliate De Courcy's second apostasy to the reader, we must abandon him to their severest condemnation for deserting Zaira, and announce his speedy return to Ireland. It was

in vain that she degraded herself by following him even in the streets—it was impossible to recall his affections. The arrival of Montgomery, with intelligence that Eva was in a deep decline, brought his resolution to a crisis, and he quitted Paris. From this period there is little more occasion for narrative. The author traces the various steps by which Eva approaches to the harbour where there is rest from each earthly storm—the affectionate services of her adopted mother—the selfish speculations of Wentworth, and the more basely selfish brutalities of the vile Tartuffe Macowen. With the history of Eva's graduated decline, is contrasted the despairing state of Zaira; her conferences and controversies with Cardonneau, a French sceptical philosopher; her escape from his snares; her resolution to become a devotee, and her horror at finding herself unable to entertain that warmth of enthusiastic zeal necessary to give effect to the Catholic nostrum of penance; her resolution to put herself to death, with all the preparations which she solemnly adopted; and her abandoning her purpose, startled by an impressive dream or vision, which impelled her to follow her versatile lover to Ireland. All these moods of a despairing mind are well described, but too much protracted. The mind becomes weary of accumulated horrors, having all reference to the same person and set of events, and belonging to a catastrophe which is inevitable, and full in view. The skill of the author, his knowledge of the human mind, his talent at expressing sorrow, in all the varieties of her melancholy lan-

guage, proves unequal to the task—during the first perusal at least—of securing unwearied attention. His labours seem as if they were employed to diversify or adorn a long strait avenue of yews and cypresses, terminating in the full view of a sepulchre.

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ments? At one time a fierce controversy betwixt Macowen and one of his pupils, a "babe in grace," as his spiritual guide termed him, "to be fed with milk."

"He was a man turned of fifty, six feet two inches high, broad and bulky in proportion, with an atrabilious complexion, a voice of thunder, and a tread that shook the room. The contrast was unspeakably ridiculous. 'Babe!' murmured De Courcy; 'Babe!' echoed Montgomery, and both had some difficulty in subduing their rebellious muscles to the placid stagnation that overspread the faces around them.—But the calm was of short continuance.—This Quinbus Flestrin, this man-mountain of a catechumen, came, not to sit with lowly docility at the feet of his teachers, but to prove that he was able to teach them. If he was a babe, as De Courcy said, 'tetchy and wayward was his infancy;' no ill-nursed, ill-tempered, captious, squalling brat, was ever a greater terror and torment in the nursery. He resisted, he retorted, he evaded, he parried, he contradicted, carped and 'cavilled on the ninth part of a hair.'

"Macowen lost his ground; then he lost his breath; then he lost his temper; scintillating eyes, quivering lips, and streaks of stormy red marking their brown cheeks, gave signal of fierce debate. All the weapons of fleshly warfare were soon drawn in the combat, and certain words that would have led to a different termination of the dispute among men of this world, passed quick and high between them. Struck with shame, they paused—a dreary pause of sullen anger and reluctant shame.—'Now, shan't we have a word of prayer,' said Mr Wentworth, who had been watching them with as much deliberate enjoyment as an ancient Roman would a spectacle of gladiators."—P. 239–241.

A more edifying scene was that of Eva herself engaged in teaching a school of little orphans, whom she maintained out of her allowance, and educated from her own lips. Yet, even amid this most laudable employment, could the fantastic delicacy of De Courcy, rendered more punctilious by the society of Zaira, find matter of offence. The dulness of the children, their blunders, their min-

gled brogues, their dirt, and all else that was unpleasing to the sense and the imagination, rendered the task even of clothing the naked, and instructing the ignorant and fatherless, disgusting in the eyes of a delicate and somewhat selfish lover of the fine arts.

These and similar scenes of contrast succeed to each other with great effect; and the feeble and vacillating mind of De Courcy is alternately agitated by returning affection for Eva, aided by compassion and by a sense of the cruelty and dishonour of deserting her, and by the superior force of character of her more accomplished rival. It becomes daily more and more plain, that the weaker feeling must give way to that which was more strong and energetic, especially when Zaira, after one or two trying interviews, agrees to banish the name of love from their intimacy, and to term it only an intimate friendship, resolves herself to adopt the task of preceptress to the bride of De Courcy, and transfer to her those accomplishments which too visibly enchanted the heart of her susceptible friend. This specious arrangement is well ridiculed by Zaira's correspondent, a French lady of fashion, having all the frivolity, the good nature, the tact and perception of character proper to one who filled a high place in the Parisian *beau monde;* and Zaira's eyes become opened to the real state of her affections. Mean while, the continued operation of contrast alienates De Courcy still further from the gentle Eva, and attaches him more firmly to her brilliant rival. A thunder-storm frightens Eva

into a state of insensibility. Another thunder-storm surprising a party of pleasure, amid the romantic scenery of the Wicklow mountains, gives Zaira the opportunity of exhibiting courage at once heroic and philosophical. All circumstances combine to show that De Courcy's hastily formed engagement with Eva will not and cannot come to a good issue. The fiendish hag from whose power De Courcy had delivered her, appears upon the scene, again and again crossing the stage like an evil-presaging apparition. One of the most frightful of these appearances takes place during a great fire in Dublin, to the progress of which Zaira and De Courcy are witnesses. The scene is described with much terrible grandeur.

"All was life, though it was the hour of repose; and all was light, terrible light, though the sky was as dark as December midnight. They attempted to ascend Cork-hill; that was rendered impossible by the crowd; and winding another way through lanes, of which the reader may be spared the names, they got into Fishamble street. Many fearful intimations of the danger struck them there.—The hollow rolling of the fire-engines, so distinct in their sound;—the cries of 'clear the way,' from the crowd, who opened their dense tumultuous mass for the passage, and instantly closed again;—the trampling of the cavalry on the wet pavement, threatening, backing, facing among the crowd;—the terrible hollow knocking on the pavement, to break open the pipes for water, which was but imperfectly supplied;—the bells of all the neighbouring churches, St John's, St Werburgh's, St Bride's, and the deep tremendous toll of Christ-church, mingled with, but heard above all, as if it summoned the sufferers to prepare, not for life but for death, and poured a kind of defiance on the very efforts it was rung to invite them to. All this came at once on them, as they entered Fishamble street, from a wretched lane through which they had been feeling their way. They emerged from it; *and when they did*, the horrors of the conflagration burst on them at once. The fire, confined in the

sphere of its action, amidst warehouses thickly enclosed, burst in terrible volumes above the tops of the houses, and seemed like a volcano, of which no one could see the crater.

"On the steps of St John's Church, a number were collected. They had snatched the furniture from their miserable lodgings; piled it up in the street, where the guard were watching it, and now sat patiently in the open air to see their habitations reduced to ashes, unknowing where they were to rest their heads that night.

"All the buildings in the neighbourhood were strongly illuminated by the fire, and still more strongly (though partially from time to time) by lights held out by the inhabitants from their windows, from the shops to the attics, six stories high; and the groupes below flashing out in the light, and disappearing in the darkness, their upturned faces, marked with the shifting traces of fear, horror, defiance, and despair, presented a subject for Salvator. No banditti, in the darkest woods of the Apennines, illuminated only by lightning, ever showed more fearful wildness of expression, or more picturesque distortion of attitude. Just then the flames sunk for a moment, but, rising again, instantly poured forth a volume of light, that set the whole horizon in a blaze. There was a shriek from the crowd, that seemed rather like the cry of triumph than despair. It is certain, that a people like the Irish, whose imagination is stronger than any other of their intellectual faculties, can utter cries of delight at the sight of a splendid conflagration that is consuming their dwellings.

"The last burst of flames produced a singular effect. The buildings in Castle street (below the range of the illumination) lay in complete darkness—darkness more intense from the surrounding light, and the tower and spire of St Werburgh's, it had *then* a fantastically elegant spire), by their height in the horizon, caught the whole effect of the fire, and appeared like a fairy palace of flame, blazing and built among the clouds."—Vol. ii. pp. 101–105.

Amidst this scene of horror and sublimity, rushes forth the beggar maniac, bursting through the crowd with irresistible force, and planting herself opposite to Zaira.

"She was, as usual, in rags, and as the strong light gleamed on her hoary streaming hair, her wild features, and her wilder

attire, she seemed fit to act the prompting and exulting fury who stood by Nero when he surveyed from his tower Rome in flames, which his own orders had kindled, and which his own orders (it is said) forbid to be extinguished. She began her usual wild dance, regardless of the crowd, and of the terrible cause of their assembling, and mingled, from time to time, exclamations in a voice between recitative and singing, that seemed modulated to the music of invisible and infernal spirits. It was very singular of this woman, that though her accent was perfectly Irish, her expressions were not so; her individual feeling seemed to swallow up and overwhelm her nationality. Wherever she was, she seemed perfectly alone—alone alike amid the mountains of Wicklow or the multitudes of Dublin; all times, circumstances, and persons seemed to yield to the single, mysterious, undefinable feeling that always governed and inspired her; and while it made her an object of supreme terror to all others, made all others objects of supreme contempt to her."—Vol. ii. pp. 107, 108.

As she attempted to seize upon Zaira, of whose individuality she retained some imperfect recollection, she was forced back by De Courcy.

"'Have you no touch of nature in ye?' said the woman, suddenly and fearfully altering her tone, and clinging close and closer to Zaira. 'Do you know who (*whom*) it is you drive away?—Have ye no touch of nature in ye?—Oh, these hands are withered, but how often they have clasped you round that white neck!—Oh, these hairs are grey, but how often have you played with them when they were as black and as bright as your own!—Sorrow for you has turned them white. Oh, look upon me,—look upon me on my knees. I don't know *your name now*, but you should never have forgot mine. Oh, have ye no nature in you, and I kneeling on the cold stones *before my own!*'"—Vol. ii. pp. 112, 113.

These ominous curses were prophetic. The departure of Zaira for the Continent brought De Courcy's apostasy to a crisis. Her father having died suddenly, deprived her of every clue, as she thought, to discover where her child existed; and the discovery of how far her affections were like to

hurry her, was another motive for her departure. She saw De Courcy once more, however, and the result of their interview was, his obtaining permission to attend her to the Continent on the footing of a companion, who, at the expiry of a twelvemonth, might claim possession of her hand. There is a letter of the deserted and heart-broken Eva to her faithless lover, which abounds with touches of beautiful and natural feeling. She thanked him for the wholesome cruelty which had restored to heaven a heart which, for his sake, had begun to love the world. She forgave him, and concluded with this pathetic prophecy.

"You will return in spring; in spring, you will be back with your triumphant beautiful bride: perhaps you will visit this room from some lingering feeling; you will see the flowers, the books, the music you once loved, all in their place, where you formerly wished to see them; and perhaps you will ask, where am *I*.—'I came,' says the eastern tale you told me, 'to the tombs of my friends, and asked where are they? and echo answered, *Where?*'"—Vol. ii. p. 276.

In the hope of rendering her juvenile lover all that was worthy, as she already accounted him all that was amiable, Zaira had yielded to the culpable weakness of becoming accessory to his breach of promise. She had not doubted that she could attach him to her by the double charms of beauty and talent, added to those of superior intellect. But Paris—that Paris in which even the lover of the Princess of Babylon became disloyal—was doomed to prove the vanity of her expectations.

The fidelity of a man is like the virtue of a female when it has succumbed in one temptation,—the

sense of fine feeling is lost, and it seldom resists another. Yet, we are far from thinking the second defection of Charles de Courcy, amiable and generous as he is painted, as half so probably *motived* as his first offence against the code of constancy. His desertion of the simple and narrow-minded Eva for a woman of such brilliant talent and powers as Zaira, while it was highly blameworthy, is but too probable an occurrence. But that, unsated by possession, and witnessing the prodigious effects produced by Zaira's talents on all that was brave and illustrious in Europe, and which was then (in 1814) assembled in Paris, he should have wantonly deserted the sacred object of his affections, and preferred to her, for ever so short a space, a certain Eulalie de Terranges, so inferior to her in all respects, exceeds every extended limit of indulgence which we can allow to a susceptible and fickle disposition, fixes upon Mr Maturin's hero the odious character of a male coquette, and makes us almost identify a character so effeminate with that ascribed by the satirist to a countryman of De Courcy's—

> "A motley figure of the Fribble tribe,
> Which heart can scarce conceive or pen describe,
> Nor male nor female neither, and yet both,
> Of neuter gender, though of Irish growth,
> A six foot suckling, mincing in its gait,
> Affected, peevish, prim, and delicate."

Lest we should appear, however, to have judged too harshly of De Courcy, we will briefly recapitulate the various motives alleged for his a second time breaking the most solemn ties that a man can

form, and deserting Zaira in Paris, as he had deserted Eva in Dublin. The blaze of Zaira's mental superiority seems to have become too scorching for De Courcy to bear, when he was no longer screened by the opportunity of retiring to contrast its brilliancy with the more calm moonlight character of Eva. She had pretensions, besides, to guide and to instruct him; and no man cares to be guided and instructed by a woman. Moreover, in the opinion of an experienced Frenchman, Zaira was *trop exigeante*, too determined to dazzle and to delight, and to inspire every moment with rapture of one description or another. "Pleasure itself, so protracted," says this connoisseur, "so exaggerated, must become pain. It is like the punishment of Regulus, cutting off the eyelids to turn the light of the sun into torture." Besides, there was the dissipation of Parisian society, and the shame of being seen one of the train of an actress—he a gentleman of fortune and birth; and there was the discovery, that Zaira had been a wife and a mother, which she had imprudently left him to receive from others; and there was a letter of expostulation from his kind guardian, conjuring him to avoid a disgraceful alliance, and not to suffer himself to be trailed over the Continent, the overgrown pupil of a female pedagogue. Lastly, there was a natural love of change, and some regret after the discarded Eva. If all these reasons cannot palliate De Courcy's second apostasy to the reader, we must abandon him to their severest condemnation for deserting Zaira, and announce his speedy return to Ireland. It was

in vain that she degraded herself by following him even in the streets—it was impossible to recall his affections. The arrival of Montgomery, with intelligence that Eva was in a deep decline, brought his resolution to a crisis, and he quitted Paris. From this period there is little more occasion for narrative. The author traces the various steps by which Eva approaches to the harbour where there is rest from each earthly storm—the affectionate services of her adopted mother—the selfish speculations of Wentworth, and the more basely selfish brutalities of the vile Tartuffe Macowen. With the history of Eva's graduated decline, is contrasted the despairing state of Zaira; her conferences and controversies with Cardonneau, a French sceptical philosopher; her escape from his snares; her resolution to become a devotee, and her horror at finding herself unable to entertain that warmth of enthusiastic zeal necessary to give effect to the Catholic nostrum of penance; her resolution to put herself to death, with all the preparations which she solemnly adopted; and her abandoning her purpose, startled by an impressive dream or vision, which impelled her to follow her versatile lover to Ireland. All these moods of a despairing mind are well described, but too much protracted. The mind becomes weary of accumulated horrors, having all reference to the same person and set of events, and belonging to a catastrophe which is inevitable, and full in view. The skill of the author, his knowledge of the human mind, his talent at expressing sorrow, in all the varieties of her melancholy lan-

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more; and the author thus closes his melancholy narrative.

"The following spring, the Miss Longwoods, gay and happy, were escorted by youthful, titled bridegrooms into that very church. They entered it fluttering in bridal finery; and as they quitted it, their steps trod lightly on the graves of De Courcy and Eva.—Such is the condition of life.

....."Zaira still lives, and lives in Ireland. A spell seems to bind her to the death-place of her daughter and lover. Her talents are gone, at least they are no longer exerted: The *oracles* may still be there, but it is only the tempest of grief that now scatters their leaves. Like Carathis in the vaults of Eblis, her hand is constantly pressed on her heart, in token of the fire that is burning there for ever; and those who are near her, constantly hear her repeat, 'My child—I have murdered my child!' When great talents are combined with calamity, their union forms the *tenth wave* of human suffering;—grief becomes inexhaustible from the unhappy fertility of genius,—and the serpents that devour us are generated out of our own vitals."—Vol. iii. pp. 407, 408.

The length of our analysis, and of our quotations, are the best proof of the pleasure with which we have read this moral and interesting tale,—and may stand in place of eulogy. We have also hinted at some of the author's errors; and we must now, in all candour and respect, mention one of considerable importance, which the reader has perhaps anticipated. It respects the resemblance betwixt the character and fate of Zaira and Corinne —a coincidence so near, as certainly to deprive Mr Maturin of all claim to originality, so far as this brilliant and well-painted character is concerned. In her accomplishments, in her beauty, in her talents, in her falling a victim to the passion of a fickle lover, Zaira closely resembles her distin-

guished prototype. Still, however, she is Corinne in Ireland, contrasted with other personages, and sustaining a different tone of feeling and conversation and argument; so that we pardon the want of originality of conception, in consideration of the new lights thrown upon this interesting female, who, in the full career of successful talent, and invested with all the glow of genius, sacrifices the world of taste and of science for an unhappily-placed affection. On the other hand, the full praise, both of invention and execution, must be allowed to Maturin's sketch of Eva—so soft, so gentle, so self-devoted—such a mixture of the purity of heaven with the simplicity of earth, concealing the most acute feelings under the appearance of devout abstraction, and unable to express her passion otherwise than by dying for it. The various impressions received by good and by bad dispositions from the profession of methodistical or evangelical tenets, form a curious chapter in the history of our modern manners. Mr Maturin has used the scalpel, not we think unfairly, but with professional rigour and dexterity, in anatomizing the effects of a system which is making way amongst us with increasing strength, and will one day have its influence on the fate perhaps of nations. But we resume our criticisms. The character of De Courcy we will not resume;—it is provokingly inconsistent; and we wish the ancient fashion of the Devil flying off with false-hearted lovers, as in the ballad of the Wandering Prince of Troy, had sustained no change in his favour.

Indeed, such a catastrophe would not have been alien to the genius of Mr Maturin, who, in the present, as well as in former publications, has shown some desire to wield the wand of the enchanter, and to call in the aid of supernatural horrors. While De Courcy was in the act of transferring his allegiance from Eva to Zaira, the phantom of the former, her *wraith*—as we call in Scotland the apparition of a living person—glides past him, arrayed in white, with eyes closed, and face pale and colourless, and is presently afterwards seen lying beneath his feet as he assists Zaira into the carriage. Eva has a dream, corresponding to the apparition in all its circumstances. This incident resembles one which we have read in our youth in Aubrey, Baxter, or some such savoury and sapient collector of ghost-stories; but we chiefly mention it, to introduce a remarkable alteration in the tragedy of *Bertram*, adopted by the author, we believe, with considerable regret. It consists in the retrenchment of a passage or two of great poetical beauty, in which Bertram is represented as spurred to the commission of his great crimes, by the direct agency of a supernatural and malevolent being. We have been favoured with a copy of the lines by a particular friend and admirer of the author, to whom he presented the manuscript copy of his play, in which alone they exist. The Prior, in his dialogue with Bertram, mentions

———" the dark knight of the forest,
So from his armour named and sable helm,
Whose unbarred vizor mortal never saw.

He dwells alone; no earthly thing lives near him,
Save the hoarse raven croaking o'er his towers,
And the dank weeds muffling his stagnant moat.

*Bertram.* I'll ring a summons on his barred portal
Shall make them through their dark valves rock and ring.

*Prior.* Thou'rt mad to take the quest.—Within my memory
One solitary man did venture there—
Dark thoughts dwelt with him, which he sought to vent.
Unto that dark compeer we saw his steps,
In winter's stormy twilight, seek that pass—
But days and years are gone, and he returns not.

*Bertram.* What fate befel him there?

*Prior.* The manner of his end was never known.

*Bertram.* That man shall be my mate—Contend not with me—
Horrors to me are kindred and society.
Or man, or fiend, he hath won the soul of Bertram.

*Bertram is afterwards discovered alone, wandering near the fatal tower, and describes the effect of the awful interview which he had courted.*

*Bertram.* Was it a man or fiend?—Whate'er it was
It hath dwelt wonderfully with me—
All is around his dwelling suitable;
The invisible blast to which the dark pines groan,
The unconscious tread to which the dark earth echoes,
The hidden waters rushing to their fall,
These sounds of which the causes are not seen
I love, for they are like my fate mysterious—
How tower'd his proud form through the shrouding gloom,
How spoke the eloquent silence of its motion,
How through the barred vizor did his accents
Roll their rich thunder on their pausing soul!
And though his mailed hand did shun my grasp,
And though his closed morion hid his feature,
Yea, all resemblance to the face of man,
I felt the hollow whisper of his welcome,
I felt those unseen eyes were fix'd on mine,
If eyes indeed were there——
Forgotten thoughts of evil, still-born mischiefs,
Foul fertile seeds of passion and of crime,
That wither'd in my heart's abortive core,
Rous'd their dark battle at his trumpet-peal.

So sweeps the tempest o'er the slumbering desert,
Waking its myriad hosts of burning death:
So calls the last dread peal the wandering atoms
Of blood and bone and flesh and dust-worn fragments,
In dire array of ghastly unity,
To bide the eternal summons—
I am not what I was since I beheld him—
I was the slave of passion's ebbing sway—
All is condensed, collected, callous now—
The groan, the burst, the fiery flash is o'er,
Down pours the dense and darkening lava-tide,
Arresting life and stilling all beneath it.

*Enter two of his band observing him.*

*First Robber.* Sees't thou with what a step of pride he stalks.—
Thou hast the dark knight of the forest seen;
For never man, from living converse come,
Trod with such step or flash'd with eye like thine.

*Second Robber.* And hast thou of a truth seen the dark knight?

*Bertram* (*turning on him suddenly*). Thy hand is chill'd with fear—Well! shivering craven,
Say I have seen him—wherefore dost thou gaze?
Long'st thou for tale of goblin-guarded portal?
Of giant champion whose spell-forged mail
Crumbled to dust at sound of magic horn—
Banner of sheeted flame whose foldings shrunk
To withering weeds that o'er the battlements
Wave to the broken spell—or demon-blast
Of winded clarion whose fell summons sinks
To lonely whisper of the shuddering breeze
O'er the charm'd towers——

*First Robber.* Mock me not thus—Hast met him of a truth?—

*Bertram.* Well, fool—

*First Robber.* Why then heaven's benison be with you.
Upon this hour we part—farewell for ever.
For mortal cause I bear a mortal weapon—
But man that leagues with demons lacks not man."

The description of the fiend's port and language,—the effect which the conference with him produces upon Bertram's mind,—the terrific dignity with which the intercourse with such an associate

invests him, and its rendering him a terror even to his own desperate banditti,—is all well conceived, and executed in a grand and magnificent strain of poetry; and, in the perusal, supposing the reader were carrying his mind back to the period when such intercourse between mortals and demons was considered as matter of indisputable truth, the story acquires probability and consistency, even from that which is in itself not only improbable but impossible. The interview with the incarnate fiend of the forest, would, in these days, be supposed to have the same effect upon the mind of Bertram, as the "metaphysical aid" of the witches produces upon that of Macbeth, awakening and stimulating that appetite for crime, which slumbered in the bosom of both, till called forth by supernatural suggestion. At the same time, while we are happy to preserve a passage of such singular beauty and power, we approve of the taste which retrenched it in action. The *suadente diabolo* is now no longer a phrase even in our indictments; and we fear his Satanic Majesty, were he to appear on the stage in modern times, would certainly incur the appropriate fate of damnation.[1]

[1] ["I take some credit to myself," says Lord Byron, "for having done my best to bring out *Bertram*. Walter Scott was the first who mentioned Maturin, which he did to me with great recommendation in 1815. Maturin sent his *Bertram*, and a letter *without* his address, so that at first I could give him no answer. When I at last hit upon his residence, I sent him a favourable answer, and something more substantial." *Bertram* was successful. But Mr Maturin's second dramatic attempt proved a failure. Lord Byron terms *Manuel* "the absurd work of a

To return to the present work.—We observe, with pleasure, that Mr Maturin has put his genius under better regulation than in his former publications, and retrenched that luxuriance of language, and too copious use of ornament, which distinguishes the authors and orators of Ireland, whose exuberance of imagination sometimes places them in the predicament of their honest countryman, who complained of being run away with by his legs. This excessive indulgence of the imagination is proper to a country where there is more genius than taste, and more copiousness than refinement of ideas. But it is an error to suffer the weeds to rush up with the grain, though their appearance may prove the richness of the soil. There is a time when an author should refrain, like Job, "even from good words—though it should be pain to him."—And although we think Mr Maturin has reformed that error indifferently well, in his present work, we do pray him, in his future compositions, to reform it altogether. For the rest, we dismiss him with our best wishes, and not without hopes that we may again meet him in the maze of fiction, since, although he has threatened, like Prospero, to break his wand, we have done our poor endeavour to save his book from being burned.

clever man," and, "with the exception of a few capers, as heavy a nightmare as ever bestrode indigestion."]

# ARTICLE VIII.

## MISS AUSTEN'S NOVELS

[*Northanger Abbey, and Persuasion. By* Miss AUSTEN.[1] 4 *vols. Quarterly Review, January,* 1821.]

THE times seem to be past when an apology was requisite from reviewers for condescending to notice a novel; when they felt themselves bound in dignity to deprecate the suspicion of paying much regard to trifles, and pleaded the necessity of occasionally stooping to humour the taste of their fair readers. The delights of fiction, if not more keenly or more generally relished, are at least more readily acknowledged by men of sense and taste; and we have lived to hear the merits of the best of this class of writings earnestly discussed by some of the ablest scholars and soundest reasoners of the present day.

We are inclined to attribute this change, not so much to an alteration in the public taste, as in the character of the productions in question. Novels may not, perhaps, display more genius now than formerly, but they contain more solid sense; they

[1] [Author of *Sense and Sensibility; Pride and Prejudice; Mansfield Park;* and *Emma.*]

may not afford higher gratification, but it is of a nature which men are less disposed to be ashamed of avowing. We remarked, in a former Number, in reviewing a work of the author now before us, that "a new style of novel has arisen, within the last fifteen or twenty years, differing from the former in the points upon which the interest hinges; neither alarming our credulity nor amusing our imagination by wild variety of incident, or by those pictures of romantic affection and sensibility, which were formerly as certain attributes of fictitious characters as they are of rare occurrence among those who actually live and die. The substitute for these excitements, which had lost much of their poignancy by the repeated and injudicious use of them, was the art of copying from nature as she really exists in the common walks of life, and presenting to the reader, instead of the splendid scenes of an imaginary world, a correct and striking representation of that which is daily taking place around him."

Now, though the origin of this new school of fiction may probably be traced, as we there suggested, to the exhaustion of the mines from which materials for entertainment had been hitherto extracted, and the necessity of gratifying the natural craving of the reader for variety, by striking into an untrodden path; the consequences resulting from this change have been far greater than the mere supply of this demand. When this Flemish painting, as it were, is introduced—this accurate and unexaggerated delineation of events and cha-

racters—it necessarily follows, that a novel, which makes good its pretensions, of giving a perfectly correct picture of common life, becomes a far more *instructive* work than one of equal or superior merit of the other class; it guides the judgment, and supplies a kind of artificial experience. It is a remark of the great father of criticism, that poetry (*i.e.* narrative, and dramatic poetry) is of a more philosophical character than history; inasmuch as the latter details what has actually happened, of which many parts may chance to be exceptions to the general rules of probability, and consequently illustrate no general principles; whereas the former shows us what must naturally, or would probably, happen under given circumstances; and thus displays to us a comprehensive view of human nature, and furnishes general rules of practical wisdom. It is evident that this will apply only to such fictions as are quite *perfect* in respect of the probability of their story; and that he, therefore, who resorts to the fabulist rather than the historian, for instruction in human character and conduct, must throw himself entirely on the judgment and skill of his teacher, and give him credit for talents much more rare than the accuracy and veracity which are the chief requisites in history. We fear, therefore, that the exultation which we can conceive some of our gentle readers to feel, at having Aristotle's warrant for (what probably they had never dreamed of) the *philosophical character* of their studies, must, in practice be somewhat qualified, by those sundry little vio-

lations of probability which are to be met with in most novels; and which so far lower their value, as models of real life, that a person who had no other preparation for the world than is afforded by them, would form, probably, a less accurate idea of things as they are, than he would of a lion from studying merely the representations on China tea-pots.

Accordingly, a heavy complaint has long lain against works of fiction, as giving a false picture of what they profess to imitate, and disqualifying their readers for the ordinary scenes and every-day duties of life. And this charge applies, we apprehend, to the generality of what are strictly called novels, with even more justice than to romances. When all the characters and events are very far removed from what we see around us, —when, perhaps, even supernatural agents are introduced, the reader may indulge, indeed, in occasional day-dreams, but will be so little reminded of what he has been reading, by any thing that occurs in actual life, that though he may perhaps feel some disrelish for the tameness of the scene before him, compared with the fairy-land he has been visiting, yet, at least, his judgment will not be depraved, nor his expectations misled; he will not apprehend a meeting with Algerine banditti on English shores, nor regard the old woman who shows him about an antique country seat, as either an enchantress or the keeper of an imprisoned damsel. But it is otherwise with those fictions which differ from common life in little or nothing

but the improbability of the occurrences: the reader is insensibly led to calculate upon some of those lucky incidents and opportune coincidences, of which he has been so much accustomed to read, and which, it is undeniable, *may* take place in real life; and to feel a sort of confidence, that however romantic his conduct may be, and in whatever difficulties it may involve him, all will be sure to come right at last, as is invariably the case with the hero of a novel.

On the other hand, so far as these pernicious effects fail to be produced, so far does the example lose its influence, and the exercise of poetical justice is rendered vain. The reward of virtuous conduct being brought about by fortunate accidents, he who abstains (taught, perhaps, by bitter disappointments) from reckoning on such accidents, wants that encouragement to virtue, which alone has been held out to him. "If I were *a man in a novel*," we remember to have heard an ingenious friend observe, "I should certainly act so and so, because I should be sure of being no loser by the most heroic self-devotion, and of ultimately succeeding in the most daring enterprises."

It may be said, in answer, that these objections apply only to the *unskilful* novelist, who, from ignorance of the world, gives an unnatural representation of what he professes to delineate. This is partly true, and partly not; for there is a distinction to be made between the *unnatural* and the merely *improbable:* a fiction is unnatural when there is some assignable reason against the events

taking place as described,—when men are represented as acting contrary to the character assigned them, or to human nature in general; as when a young lady of seventeen, brought up in ease, luxury, and retirement, with no companions but the narrow-minded and illiterate, displays (as a heroine usually does), under the most trying circumstances, such wisdom, fortitude, and knowledge of the world, as the best instructors and the best examples can rarely produce without the aid of more mature age and longer experience.—On the other hand, a fiction is still *improbable*, though not *unnatural*, when there is no reason to be assigned why things should not take place as represented, except that the *overbalance of chances is* against it; the hero meets, in his utmost distress, most opportunely, with the very person to whom he had formerly done a signal service, and who happens to communicate to him a piece of intelligence which sets all to rights. Why should he not meet him as well as any one else? all that can be said is, that there is no reason why he should. The infant who is saved from a wreck, and who afterwards becomes such a constellation of virtues and accomplishments, turns out to be no other than the nephew of the very gentleman, on whose estate the waves had cast him, and whose lovely daughter he had so long sighed for in vain: there is no reason to be given, except from the calculation of chances, why he should not have been thrown on one part of the coast as well as another. Nay, it would be nothing unnatural, though the most determined novel-reader would

be shocked at its improbability, if all the hero's enemies, while they were conspiring his ruin, were to be struck dead together by a lucky flash of lightning: yet many *dénouements* which *are* decidedly unnatural, are better tolerated than this would be. We shall, perhaps, best explain our meaning by examples, taken from a novel of great merit in many respects. When Lord Glenthorn, in whom a most unfavourable education has acted on a most unfavourable disposition, after a life of torpor, broken only by short sallies of forced exertion, on a sudden reverse of fortune, displays at once the most persevering diligence in the most repulsive studies, and in middle life, without any previous habits of exertion, any hope of early business, or the example of friends, or the stimulus of actual want, to urge him, outstrips every competitor, though every competitor has every advantage against him; this is unnatural.—When Lord Glenthorn, the instant he is stripped of his estates, meets, falls in love with, and is conditionally accepted by the very lady who is remotely entitled to those estates; when, the instant he has fulfilled the conditions of their marriage, the family of the person possessed of the estates becomes extinct, and by the concurrence of circumstances, against every one of which the chances were enormous, the hero is re-instated in all his old domains; this is merely improbable. The distinction which we have been pointing out may be plainly perceived in the events of real life; when any thing takes place of such a nature as we should call, in a fiction, merely im-

probable, because there are many chances against it, we call it a lucky or unlucky accident, a singular coincidence, something very extraordinary, odd, curious, &c.; whereas any thing which, in a fiction, would be called unnatural, when it actually occurs (and such things do occur), is still called unnatural, inexplicable, unaccountable, inconceivable, &c., epithets which are not applied to events that have merely the balance of chances against them.

Now, though an author who understands human nature is not likely to introduce into his fictions any thing that is unnatural, he will often have much that is improbable: he may place his personages, by the intervention of accident, in striking situations, and lead them through a course of extraordinary adventures; and yet, in the midst of all this, he will keep up the most perfect consistency of character, and make them act as it would be natural for men to act in such situations and circumstances. Fielding's novels are a good illustration of this: they display great knowledge of mankind; the characters are well preserved; the persons introduced all act as one would naturally expect they should, in the circumstances in which they are placed; but these circumstances are such as it is incalculably improbable should ever exist: several of the events, taken singly, are much against the chances of probability; but the combination of the whole in a connected series, is next to impossible. Even the romances which admit a mixture of supernatural agency, are not more unfit to prepare men for real life, than such novels as these; since

one might just as reasonably calculate on the intervention of a fairy, as on the train of lucky chances which combine first to involve Tom Jones in his difficulties, and afterwards to extricate him. Perhaps, indeed, the supernatural fable is of the two not only (as we before remarked) the less mischievous in its moral effects, but also the more correct kind of composition in point of taste: the author lays down a kind of hypothesis of the existence of ghosts, witches, or fairies, and professes to describe what would take place under that hypothesis; the novelist, on the contrary, makes no demand of extraordinary machinery, but professes to describe what may actually take place, according to the existing laws of human affairs: if he therefore present us with a series of events quite unlike any which ever do take place, we have reason to complain that he has not made good his professions.

When, therefore, the generality, even of the most approved novels, were of this character (to say nothing of the heavier charges brought, of inflaming the passions of young persons by warm descriptions, weakening their abhorence of profligacy, by exhibiting it in combination with the most engaging qualities, and presenting vice in all its allurements, while setting forth the triumphs of "virtue rewarded") it is not to be wondered that the grave guardians of youth should have generally stigmatized the whole class, as "serving only to fill young people's heads with romantic love-stories, and rendering them unfit to mind any thing else."

That this censure and caution should in many instances be indiscriminate, can surprise no one, who recollects how rare a quality discrimination is; and how much better it suits indolence, as well as ignorance, to lay down a rule, than to ascertain the exceptions to it: we are acquainted with a careful mother whose daughters, while they never in their lives read a *novel* of any kind, are permitted to peruse, without reserve, any *plays* that happen to fall in their way; and with another, from whom no lessons, however excellent, of wisdom and piety, contained in a *prose-fiction*, can obtain quarter; but who, on the other hand, is no less indiscriminately indulgent to her children in the article of tales in *verse*, of whatever character.

The change, however, which we have already noticed, as having taken place in the character of several modern novels, has operated in a considerable degree to do away this prejudice; and has elevated this species of composition, in some respects at least, into a much higher class. For most of that instruction which used to be presented to the world in the shape of formal dissertations, or shorter and more desultory moral essays, such as those of the *Spectator* and *Rambler*, we may now resort to the pages of the acute and judicious, but not less amusing, novelists who have lately appeared. If their views of men and manners are no less just than those of the essayists who preceded them, are they to be rated lower, because they present to us these views, not in the language of general descrip-

tion, but in the form of well-constructed fictitious narrative? If the practical lessons they inculcate, are no less sound and useful, it is surely no diminution of their merit that they are conveyed by example instead of precept; nor, if their remarks are neither less wise nor less important, are they the less valuable for being represented as thrown out in the course of conversations suggested by the circumstances of the speakers, and perfectly in character. The praise and blame of the moralist are surely not the less effectual for being bestowed, not in general declamation, on classes of men, but on individuals representing those classes, who are so clearly delineated and brought into action before us, that we seem to be acquainted with them, and feel an interest in their fate.

Biography is allowed, on all hands, to be one of the most attractive and profitable kinds of reading: now such novels as we have been speaking of, being a kind of fictitious biography, bear the same relation to the real, that epic and tragic poetry, according to Aristotle, bear to history; they present us (supposing, of course, each perfect in its kind) with the general, instead of the particular—the probable instead of the true; and by leaving out those accidental irregularities, and exceptions to general rules, which constitute the many improbabilities of real narrative, present us with a clear and *abstracted* view of the general rules themselves; and thus concentrate, as it were, into a small compass, the net result of wide experience.

Among the authors of this school there is no one

superior, if equal, to the lady whose last production is now before us, and whom we have much regret in finally taking leave of: her death (in the prime of life, considered as a writer) being announced in this the first publication to which her name is prefixed.[1] We regret the failure not only of a source of innocent amusement, but also of that supply of practical good sense and instructive example, which she would probably have continued to furnish better than any of her contemporaries:—Miss Edgeworth, indeed, draws characters and details conversations, such as they occur in real life, with a spirit and fidelity not to be surpassed; but her stories are most romantically improbable (in the sense above explained), almost all the important events of them being brought about by most *providential* coincidences; and this, as we have already remarked, is not merely faulty, inasmuch as it evinces a want of skill in the writer, and gives an air of clumsiness to the fiction, but is a very considerable drawback on its practical utility; the personages either of fiction or history being then only profitable examples, when their good or ill conduct meets its appropriate reward, not from a sort of

[1] [Miss Jane Austen was born in 1775, at Steventon, in Hants, of which parish her father was rector upwards of forty years. On his death, she removed with her mother and sister for a short time to Southampton, and finally, in 1809, to the pleasant village of Chawton, in the same county; from which place this amiable and accomplished lady sent her novels into the world. In May, 1817, symptoms of a deep decay induced her removal to Winchester, for the benefit of constant medical aid. She died there in July following, in her forty-second year.]

independent machinery of accidents, but as a necessary or probable result, according to the ordinary course of affairs. Miss Edgeworth also is somewhat too avowedly didactic: that seems to be true of her, which the French critics, in the extravagance of their conceits, attributed to Homer and Virgil; viz. that they first thought of a moral, and then framed a fable to illustrate it; she would, we think, instruct more successfully, and she would, we are sure, please more frequently, if she kept the design of teaching more out of sight, and did not so glaringly press every circumstance of her story, principal or subordinate, into the service of a principle to be inculcated, or information to be given. A certain portion of moral instruction must accompany every well-invented narrative. Virtue must be represented as producing, at the long run, happiness; and vice, misery; and the accidental events, that in real life interrupt this tendency, are anomalies which, though true individually, are as false generally as the accidental deformities which vary the average outline of the human figure. They would be as much out of place in a fictitious narrative, as a wen in an academic model. But any *direct* attempt at moral teaching, and any attempt whatever to give scientific information, will, we fear, unless managed with the utmost discretion, interfere with what, after all, is the immediate and peculiar object of the novelist, as of the poet, *to please*. If instruction do not join as a volunteer, she will do no good service. Miss Edgeworth's novels put us in mind of those clocks and watches which are con-

demned "a double or a treble debt to pay:" which, besides their legitimate object, to show the hour, tell you the day of the month or the week, give you a landscape for a dial-plate, with the second hand forming the sails of a windmill, or have a barrel to play a tune, or an alarum to remind you of an engagement: all very good things in their way; but so it is that these watches never tell the time so well as those in which that is the exclusive object of the maker. Every additional movement is an obstacle to the original design. We do not deny that we have learned much physic, and much law, from *Patronage*, particularly the latter, for Miss Edgeworth's law is of a very original kind; but it was not to learn law and physic that we took up the book, and we suspect we should have been more pleased if we had been less taught. With regard to the influence of religion, which is scarcely, if at all, alluded to in Miss Edgeworth's novels, we would abstain from pronouncing any decision which should apply to her personally. She may, for aught we know, entertain opinions which would not permit her, with consistency, to attribute more to it than she has done; in that case she stands acquitted, *in foro conscientiæ*, of wilfully suppressing any thing which she acknowledges to be true and important; but, as a writer, it must still be considered as a blemish, in the eyes at least of those who think differently, that virtue should be studiously inculcated with scarcely any reference to what they regard as the main spring of it; that vice should be traced to every other source except the want of

religious principle; that the most radical change from worthlessness to excellence should be represented as wholly independent of that agent which they consider as the only one that can accomplish it; and that consolation under affliction should be represented as derived from every source except the one which they look to as the only true and sure one: "is it not because there is not a God in Israel that ye have sent to enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron?"

Miss Austen has the merit (in our judgment most essential) of being evidently a Christian writer: a merit which is much enhanced, both on the score of good taste, and of practical utility, by her religion being not at all obtrusive. She might defy the most fastidious critic to call any of her novels (as *Cœlebs* was designated, we will not say altogether without reason), a "dramatic sermon." The subject is rather alluded to, and that incidentally, than studiously brought forward and dwelt upon. In fact she is more sparing of it than would be thought desirable by some persons; perhaps even by herself, had she consulted merely her own sentiments; but she probably introduced it as far as she thought would be generally acceptable and profitable: for when the purpose of inculcating a religious principle is made too palpably prominent, many readers, if they do not throw aside the book with disgust, are apt to fortify themselves with that respectful kind of apathy with which they undergo a regular sermon, and prepare themselves as they do to swallow a dose of medicine, endeavouring to *get it down*

in large gulps, without tasting it more than is necessary.

The moral lessons also of this lady's novels, though clearly and impressively conveyed, are not offensively put forward, but spring incidentally from the circumstances of the story; they are not forced upon the reader, but he is left to collect them (though without any difficulty) for himself: hers is that unpretending kind of instruction which is furnished by real life; and certainly no author has ever conformed more closely to real life, as well in the incidents, as in the characters and descriptions. Her fables appear to us to be, in their own way, nearly faultless; they do not consist (like those of some of the writers who have attempted this kind of common-life novel writing) of a string of unconnected events which have little or no bearing on one main plot, and are introduced evidently for the sole purpose of bringing in characters and conversations; but have all that compactness of plan and unity of action which is generally produced by a sacrifice of probability: yet they have little or nothing that is not probable; the story proceeds without the aid of extraordinary accidents; the events which take place are the necessary or natural consequences of what has preceded; and yet (which is a very rare merit indeed) the final catastrophe is scarcely ever clearly foreseen from the beginning, and very often comes, upon the generality of readers at least, quite unexpected. We know not whether Miss Austen ever had access to the precepts of Aristotle; but there are few, if

any, writers of fiction who have illustrated them more successfully.

The vivid distinctness of description, the minute fidelity of detail, and air of unstudied ease in the scenes represented, which are no less necessary than probability of incident, to carry the reader's imagination along with the story, and give fiction the perfect appearance of reality, she possesses in a high degree; and the object is accomplished without resorting to those deviations from the ordinary plan of narrative in the third person, which have been patronised by some eminent masters. We allude to the two other methods of conducting a fictitious story, viz. either by narrative in the first person, when the hero is made to tell his own tale, or by a series of letters; both of which we conceive have been adopted with a view of heightening the resemblance of the fiction to reality. At first sight, indeed, there might appear no reason why a story told in the first person should have more the air of a real history than in the third; especially as the majority of real histories actually are in the third person; nevertheless, experience seems to show that such is the case; provided there be no want of skill in the writer, the resemblance to real life, of a fiction thus conducted, will approach much the nearest (other points being equal) to a deception, and the interest felt in it, to that which we feel in real transactions. We need only instance Defoe's novels, which, in spite of much improbability, we believe have been oftener mistaken for true narratives, than any fictions that ever were composed.

Colonel Newport is well known to have been cited as an historical authority; and we have ourselves found great difficulty in convincing many of our friends that Defoe was not himself the citizen, who relates the plague of London. The reason probably is, that in the ordinary form of narrative, the writer is not content to exhibit, like a real historian, a bare detail of such circumstances as might actually have come under his knowledge; but presents us with a description of what is passing in the minds of the parties, and gives an account of their feelings and motives, as well as their most private conversations in various places at once. All this is very amusing, but perfectly unnatural; the merest simpleton could hardly mistake a fiction of *this* kind for a true history, unless he believed the writer to be endued with omniscience and omnipresence, or to be aided by familiar spirits, doing the office of Homer's Muses, whom he invokes to tell him all that could not otherwise be known :—

Ὑμεις γαρ θεοι ἐστε, παρεστε τε, ἰστε τε παντα.

Let the events, therefore, which are detailed, and the characters described, be ever so natural, the way in which they are presented to us is of a kind of supernatural cast, perfectly unlike any real history that ever was or can be written, and thus requiring a greater stretch of imagination in the reader. On the other hand, the supposed narrator of his own history never pretends to dive into the thoughts and feelings of the other parties; he merely describes his own, and gives his conjectures

as to those of the rest, just as a real autobiographer might do; and thus an author is enabled to assimilate his fiction to reality, without withholding that delineation of the inward workings of the human heart, which is so much coveted. Nevertheless, novels in the first person have not succeeded so well as to make that mode of writing become very general. It is objected to them, not without reason, that they want a *hero:* the person intended to occupy that post being the narrator himself, who of course cannot so describe his own conduct and character as to make the reader thoroughly acquainted with him; though the attempt frequently produces an offensive appearance of egotism.

The plan of a fictitious correspondence seems calculated in some measure to combine the advantages of the other two; since, by allowing each personage to be the speaker in turn, the feelings of each may be described by himself, and his character and conduct by another. But these novels are apt to become excessively tedious; since, to give the letters the appearance of reality (without which the main object proposed would be defeated), they must contain a very large proportion of matter which has no bearing at all upon the story. There is also generally a sort of awkward disjointed appearance in a novel which proceeds entirely in letters, and holds together, as it were, by continual splicing.

Miss Austen, though she has in a few places introduced letters with great effect, has on the whole conducted her novels on the ordinary plan, describing, without scruple, private conversations

and uncommunicated feelings: but she has not been forgetful of the important maxim, so long ago illustrated by Homer, and afterwards enforced by Aristotle,[1] of saying as little as possible in her own person, and giving a dramatic air to the narrative, by introducing frequent conversations; which she conducts with a regard to character hardly exceeded even by Shakspeare himself. Like him, she shows as admirable a discrimination in the characters of fools as of people of sense; a merit which is far from common. To invent, indeed, a conversasion full of wisdom or of wit, requires that the writer should himself possess ability; but the converse does not hold good: it is no fool that can describe fools well; and many who have succeeded pretty well in painting superior characters, have failed in giving individuality to those weaker ones, which it is necessary to introduce in order to give a faithful representation of real life: they exhibit to us mere folly in the abstract, forgetting that to the eye of a skilful naturalist the insects on a leaf present as wide differences as exist between the elephant and the lion. Slender, and Shallow, and Aguecheek, as Shakspeare has painted them, though equally fools, resemble one another no more than Richard, and Macbeth, and Julius Cæsar; and Miss Austen's Mrs Bennet, Mr Rushworth, and Miss Bates, are no more alike than her Darcy, Knightley, and Edmund Bertram. Some have complained, indeed, of finding her fools too much like nature, and

[1] μᾶλλον ἀνθρ.—Arist. Poet.

consequently tiresome; there is no disputing about tastes; all we can say is, that such critics must (whatever difference they may outwardly pay to received opinions) find the *Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Twelfth Night* very tiresome; and that those who look with pleasure at Wilkie's pictures, or those of the Dutch school, must admit that excellence of imitation may confer attraction on that which would be insipid or disagreeable in the reality.

Her minuteness of detail has also been found fault with; but even where it produces, at the time, a degree of tediousness, we know not whether that can justly be reckoned a blemish, which is absolutely essential to a very high excellence. Now, it is absolutely impossible, without this, to produce that thorough acquaintance with the characters, which is necessary to make the reader heartily interested in them. Let any one cut out from the *Iliad*, or from Shakspeare's plays, every thing (we are far from saying that either might not lose some parts with advantage, but let him reject every thing) which is absolutely devoid of importance and of interest *in itself;* and he will find that what is left will have lost more than half its charms. We are convinced that some writers have diminished the effect of their works by being scrupulous to admit nothing into them which had not some absolute, intrinsic, and independent merit. They have acted like those who strip off the leaves of a fruit-tree, as being of themselves good for nothing, with the view of securing more nourishment to the fruit,

cannot in fact cannot attain its full maturity and
power without them.

*Mansfield Park* contains some of Miss Austen's
best comic humor, as well as her most humorous
exaggeration. The following specimen unites both:
it is a sketch of the mode of education adopted for
the two Miss Bertrams, by their aunt Norris, whose
husband, Sir Thomas, has just admitted into his
family a poor niece, Fanny Price (the heroine), a
little stranger, and much less accomplished than his
daughters.

"Dear madam, only think, my cousin cannot put the map
of Europe together—or my cousin cannot tell the principal rivers
in Russia—or the seven head of Asia Minor—or she does not
know the difference between water-colours and crayons!—How
surprising!—Do you ever hear any thing so stupid?"

"My child, their consideration must needs reply; 'it is very
true, but you must not expect every body to be so forward and
ready as yourself.'"

"But, aunt, she is really so very ignorant!—Do you know,
she asked me last night, which way she would go to get to Ireland;
and she says that the island ocean to the isle of Wight. She thinks
there is nothing but the isle of Wight, and the calls it *the Island*, as
if there were no other island in the world. I am sure I should
have been ashamed of myself if I had not known better long
before I was as old as she is. I cannot remember the time
when I did not know a great deal that she has not the least
notion of yet. How long ago it is, aunt, since we used to repeat
the chronological order of the kings of England, with the dates
of their accession, and some of the principal events of their
reigns."

"Yes, indeed, the eldest and of the Roman emperors as
well as Shakespeare, besides a great deal of the Heathen Mythology,
and all the counties, sea-coasts, rivers, and distinguished
inhabitants."

"I have seen indeed, sir down, but you are blessed with your
memories, and your poor cousin has probably none at all.

There is a vast deal of difference in memories, as well as in every thing else, and therefore you must make allowance for your cousin, and pity her deficiency. And remember that, if you are ever so forward and clever yourselves, you should always be modest; for, much as you know already, there is a great deal more for you to learn.'

"'Yes, I know there is, till I am seventeen. But I must tell you another thing of Fanny, so odd and so stupid. Do you know, she says she does not want to learn either music or drawing?'

"'To be sure, my dear, that is very stupid indeed, and shows a great want of genius and emulation. But all things considered, I do not know whether it is not as well that it should be so, for, though you know (owing to me) your papa and mamma are so good as to bring her up with you, it is not at all necessary that she should be as accomplished as you are;—on the contrary, it is much more desirable that there should be a difference.'"—P. 33.

The character of Sir Thomas is admirably drawn; one of those men who always judge rightly, and act wisely, when a case is fairly put before them; but who are quite destitute of acuteness of discernment and adroitness of conduct. The Miss Bertrams, without any peculiarly bad natural disposition, and merely with that selfishness, self-importance, and want of moral training, which are the natural result of their education, are conducted by a train of probable circumstances, to a catastrophe which involves their father in the deepest affliction. It is melancholy to reflect how many young ladies in the same sphere, with what is ordinarily called every advantage in point of education, are so precisely in the same situation, that if they avoid a similar fate, it must be rather from good luck than any thing else. The

care that is taken to keep from them every thing in the shape of affliction, prevents their best feelings from being exercised; and the pains bestowed on their accomplishment, raises their idea of their own consequence: the heart becomes hard, and is engrossed by vanity with all its concomitant vices. Mere moral and religious *instruction* are not adequate to correct all this. But it is a shame to give in our own language sentiments which are so much better expressed by Miss Austen.

"Sir Thomas, too, lately became aware how unfavourable to the character of any young people, must be the totally opposite treatment which Maria and Julia had been always experiencing at home, where the excessive indulgence and flattery of their aunt had been continually contrasted with his own severity. He saw how ill he had judged, in expecting to counteract what was wrong in Mrs Norris, by its reverse in himself, clearly saw that he had but increased the evil, by teaching them so to repress their spirits in his presence, as to make their real disposition unknown to him, and sending them for all their indulgences to a person who had been able to attach them only by the blindness of her affection, and the excess of her praise.

"Here had been grievous mismanagement; but, bad as it was, he gradually grew to feel that it had not been the most direful mistake in his plan of education. Something must have been wanting *within*, or time would have worn away much of its ill effect. He feared that principle, active principle, had been wanting, that they had never been properly taught to govern their inclinations and tempers, by that sense of duty which can alone suffice. They had been instructed theoretically in their religion, but never required to bring it into daily practice. To be distinguished for elegance and accomplishments—the authorized object of their youth—could have had no useful influence that way, no moral effect on the mind. He had meant them to be good, but his cares had been directed to the understanding and manners, not the disposition; and of the necessity of self-denial and humility, he feared they had never heard from any lips that could profit them.

"Bitterly did he deplore a deficiency which now he could scarcely comprehend to have been possible. Wretchedly did he feel, that with all the cost and care of an anxious and expensive education, he had brought up his daughters without their understanding their first duties, or his being acquainted with their character and temper."—Vol. iii. pp. 330–332.

Edmund Bertram, the second son, a sensible and worthy young man, is captivated by a Miss Crawford, who, with her brother, is on a visit at the parsonage with her half-sister, Mrs Grant: the progress of his passion is very happily depicted:

"Miss Crawford's attractions did not lessen. The harp arrived, and rather added to her beauty, wit, and good-humour, for she played with the greatest obligingness, with an expression and taste which were peculiarly becoming, and there was something clever to be said at the close of every air. Edmund was at the parsonage every day to be indulged with his favourite instrument; one morning secured an invitation for the next, for the lady could not be unwilling to have a listener, and every thing was soon in a fair train.

"A young woman, pretty, lively, with a harp as elegant as herself; and both placed near a window, cut down to the ground, and opening on a little lawn, surrounded by shrubs in the rich foliage of summer, was enough to catch any man's heart. The season, the scene, the air, were all favourable to tenderness and sentiment."—Vol. i. pp. 132, 133.

He is, however, put in doubt as to her character, by the occasional levity of her sentiments, and her aversion to his intended profession, the church, and to a retired life. Both she and her brother are very clever, agreeable, and good-humoured, and not without moral taste (for Miss Austen does not deal in fiends and angels), but brought up without strict principles, and destitute of real self-denying benevolence. The latter falls in love with Fanny

Price, whom he had been originally intending to flirt with for his own amusement. She, however, objects to his principles; being not satisfied with religious belief and practice in herself, and careless about them in her husband. In this respect she presents a useful example to a good many modern females, whose apparent regard for religion in themselves, and indifference about it in their partners for life, make one sometimes inclined to think that they hold the opposite extreme to the Turk's opinion, and believe men to have no souls. Her uncle, Sir Thomas, however, who sees nothing of her objection, is displeased at her refusal; and thinking that she may not sufficiently prize the comforts of wealth to which she has been so long accustomed, without the aid of contrast, encourages her paying a visit to her father, a Captain Price, of the marines, settled with a large family at Portsmouth. She goes, accompanied by her favourite brother William, with all the fond recollections, and bright anticipations, of a visit after eight years' absence.

With a candour very rare in a novelist, Miss Austen describes the remedy as producing its effect. After she has spent a month in the noise, privations, and vulgarities of home, Mr Crawford pays her a visit of a couple of days; after he was gone,

"Fanny was out of spirits all the rest of the day. Though tolerably secure of not seeing Mr Crawford again, she could not help being low. It was parting with somebody of the nature of a friend; and though in one light glad to have him gone, it seemed as if she was now deserted by every body; it was a sort of renewed separation from Mansfield; and she could not think of his returning to town, and being frequently with Mary and

Edmund, without feelings so near akin to envy, as made her hate herself for having them.

"Her dejection had no abatement from any thing passing around her; a friend or two of her father's, as always happened if he was not with them, spent the long, long evening there; and from six o'clock to half-past nine, there was little intermission of noise or grog. She was very low. The wonderful improvement which she still fancied in Mr Crawford, was the nearest to administering comfort of any thing within the current of her thoughts. Not considering in how different a circle she had been just seeing him, nor how much might be owing to contrast, she was quite persuaded of his being astonishingly more gentle, and regardful of others, than formerly. And if in little things, must it not be so in great? So anxious for her health and comfort, so very feeling as he now expressed himself, and really seemed, might not it be fairly supposed, that he would not much longer persevere in a suit so distressing to her?"—Vol. iii. pp. 224, 225.

Fanny is, however, armed against Mr Crawford by a stronger feeling than even her disapprobation; by a vehement attachment to Edmund. The silence in which this passion is cherished — the slender hopes and enjoyments by which it is fed—the restlessness and jealousy with which it fills a mind naturally active, contented and unsuspicious—the manner in which it tinges every event and every reflection, are painted with a vividness and a detail of which we can scarcely conceive any one but a female, and we should almost add, a female writing from recollection, capable.

To say the truth, we suspect one of Miss Austen's great merits in our eyes to be, the insight she gives us into the peculiarities of female character. Authoresses can scarcely ever forget the *esprit de corps*—can scarcely ever forget that they *are authoresses*. They seem to feel a sympathetic

shudder at exposing naked a female mind. *Elles se peignent en buste*, and leave the mysteries of womanhood to be described by some interloping male, like Richardson or Marivaux, who is turned out before he has seen half the rites, and is forced to spin from his own conjectures the rest. Now from this fault Miss Austen is free. Her heroines are what one knows women must be, though one never can get them to acknowledge it. As liable to "fall in love first," as anxious to attract the attention of agreeable men, as much taken with a striking manner, or a handsome face, as unequally gifted with constancy and firmness, as liable to have their affections biassed by convenience or fashion, as we, on our part, will admit men to be. As some illustration of what we mean, we refer our readers to the conversation between Miss Crawford and Fanny, vol. iii. p. 102. Fanny's meeting with her father, p. 199, her reflections after reading Edmund's letter, 246, her happiness (good, and heroine though she be) in the midst of the misery of all her friends, when she finds that Edmund has decidedly broken with her rival; feelings, all of them, which, under the influence of strong passion, must alloy the purest mind, but with which scarcely any *authoress* but Miss Austen would have ventured to temper the etherial materials of a heroine.

But we must proceed to the publication of which the title is prefixed to this article. It contains, it seems, the earliest and the latest productions of the author; the first of them having been pur-

chased, we are told, many years back by a bookseller, who, for some reason unexplained, thought proper to alter his mind and withhold it. We do not much applaud his taste; for though it is decidedly inferior to her other works, having less plot, and what there is, less artificially wrought up, and also less exquisite nicety of moral painting; yet the same kind of excellences which characterise the other novels may be perceived in this, in a degree which would have been highly creditable to most other writers of the same school, and which would have entitled the author to considerable praise, had she written nothing better.

We already begin to fear that we have indulged too much in extracts, and we must save some room for *Persuasion*, or we could not resist giving a specimen of John Thorpe, with his horse that *cannot* go less than ten miles an hour, his refusal to drive his sister "because she has such thick ankles," and his sober consumption of five pints of port a-day; altogether the best portrait of a species, which, though almost extinct, cannot yet be quite classed among the Palæotheria, the Bang-up Oxonian. Miss Thorpe, the jilt of middling life, is, in her way, quite as good, though she has not the advantage of being the representative of a rare or a diminishing species. We fear few of our readers, however they may admire the *naïveté*, will admit the truth of poor John Morland's postscript, "I can never expect to know such another woman."

The latter of these novels, however, *Persuasion*, which is more strictly to be considered as a posthu-

mous work, possesses that superiority which might be expected from the more mature age at which it was written, and is second, we think, to none of the former ones, if not superior to all. In the humorous delineation of character it does not abound quite so much as some of the others, though it has great merit even on that score; but it has more of that tender and yet elevated kind of interest which is aimed at by the generality of novels, and in pursuit of which they seldom fail of running into romantic extravagance: on the whole, it is one of the most elegant fictions of common life we ever remember to have met with.

Sir Walter Elliot, a silly and conceited baronet, has three daughters, the eldest two, unmarried, and the third, Mary, the wife of a neighbouring gentleman, Mr Charles Musgrove, heir to a considerable fortune, and living in a genteel cottage in the neighbourhood of the Great House which he is hereafter to inherit. The second daughter, Anne, who is the heroine, and the only one of the family possessed of good sense (a quality which Miss Austen is as sparing of in her novels, as we fear her great mistress, Nature, has been in real life), when on a visit to her sister, is, by that sort of instinct which generally points out to all parties the person on whose judgment and temper they may rely, appealed to in all the little family differences which arise, and which are described with infinite spirit and detail.

The following touch reminds us, in its minute fidelity to nature, of some of the happiest strokes

in the subordinate parts of Hogarth's prints: Mr C. Musgrove has an aunt whom he wishes to treat with becoming attention, but who, from being of a somewhat inferior class in point of family and fashion, is studiously shunned by his wife, who has all the family pride of her father and elder sister: he takes the opportunity of a walk with a large party on a fine day, to visit this despised relation, but cannot persuade his wife to accompany him; she pleads fatigue, and remains with the rest to await his return; and he walks home with her, not much pleased at the incivility she has shown.

"She (Anne Elliot) joined Charles and Mary, and was tired enough to be very glad of Charles's other arm;—but Charles, though in very good-humour with her, was out of temper with his wife. Mary had shown herself disobliging to him, and was now to reap the consequence, which consequence was his dropping her arm almost every moment, to cut off the heads of some nettles in the hedge with his switch; and when Mary began to complain of it, and lament her being ill-used, according to custom, in being on the hedge side, while Anne was never incommoded on the other, he dropped the arms of both to hunt after a weasel which he had a momentary glance of; and they could hardly get him along at all."—Vol. iii. pp. 211, 212.

But the principal interest arises from a combination of events which cannot better be explained than by a part of the prefatory narrative, which forms, in general, an Euripidean prologue to Miss Austen's novels.

"*He* was not Mr Wentworth, the former curate of Monkford, however suspicious appearances may be, but a Captain Frederick Wentworth, his brother, who being made commander in consequence of the action off St Domingo, and not immediately employed, had come into Somersetshire in the summer of 1806; and having no parent living, found a home for half a year, at Monkford. He was, at that time, a remarkably fine

denied, that it has often proved a powerful stimulus to exertion where others have failed, and has called forth talents unknown before even to the possessor. What, though the pursuit may be fruitless, and the hopes visionary? The result may be a real and substantial benefit, though of another kind; the vineyard may have been cultivated by digging in it for the treasure which is never to be found. What, though the perfections with which imagination has decorated the beloved object, may, in fact, exist but in a slender degree? still they are believed in and admired as real; if not, the love is such as does not merit the name; and it is proverbially true that men become assimilated to the character (*i. e.* what they *think* the character) of the being they fervently adore: thus, as in the noblest exhibitions of the stage, though that which is contemplated be but a fiction, it may be realized in the mind of the beholder; and, though grasping at a cloud, he may become worthy of possessing a real goddess. Many a generous sentiment, and many a virtuous resolution, have been called forth and matured by admiration of one, who may herself perhaps have been incapable of either. It matters not what the object is that a man aspires to be worthy of, and proposes as a model for imitation, if he does but *believe* it to be excellent. Moreover, all doubts of success (and they are seldom, if ever, entirely wanting) must either produce or exercise humility; and the endeavour to study another's interest and inclinations, and prefer them to one's own, may promote a habit of

general benevolence which may outlast the present occasion. Every thing, in short, which tends to abstract a man in any degree, or in any way, from self,—from self-admiration and self-interest, has so far at least, a beneficial influence in forming the character.

On the whole, Miss Austen's works may safely be recommended, not only as among the most unexceptionable of their class, but as combining, in an eminent degree, instruction with amusement, though without the direct effort at the former, of which we have complained, as sometimes defeating its object. For those who cannot, or will not, *learn* any thing from productions of this kind, she has provided entertainment which entitles her to thanks; for mere innocent amusement is in itself a good, when it interferes with no greater: especially as it may occupy the place of some other that may *not* be innocent. The Eastern monarch who proclaimed a reward to him who should discover a new pleasure, would have deserved well of mankind had he stipulated that it should be blameless. Those, again, who delight in the study of human nature, may improve in the knowledge of it, and in the profitable application of that knowledge, by the perusal of such fictions as those before us.

young man, with a great deal of intelligence, spirit, and brilliancy; and Anne, an extremely pretty girl, with gentleness, modesty, taste, and feeling. Half the sum of attraction, on either side, might have been enough, for he had nothing to do, and she had hardly any body to love; but the encounter of such lavish recommendations could not fail. They were gradually acquainted, and when acquainted, rapidly and deeply in love. It would be difficult to say which had seen highest perfection in the other, or which had been the happiest; she, in receiving his declarations and proposals, or he in having them accepted.

"A short period of exquisite felicity followed, and but a short one. Troubles soon arose. Sir Walter, on being applied to, without actually withholding his consent, or saying it should never be, gave it all the negative of great astonishment, great coldness, great silence, and a professed resolution of doing nothing for his daughter. He thought it a very degrading alliance; and Lady Russell, though with more tempered and pardonable pride, received it as a most unfortunate one.

"Anne Elliot, with all her claims of birth, beauty, and mind, to throw herself away at nineteen; involve herself at nineteen in an engagement with a young man, who had nothing but himself to recommend him, and no hopes of attaining affluence, but in the chances of a most uncertain profession; and no connexions to secure even his further rise in that profession; would be, indeed, a throwing away, which she grieved to think of! Anne Elliot, so young; known to so few, to be snatched off by a stranger without alliance or fortune; or rather sunk by him into a state of most wearing, anxious, youth-killing dependence! It must not be, if by any fair interference of friendship, any representations from one who had almost a mother's love, and mother's rights, it could be prevented.

"Captain Wentworth had no fortune. He had been lucky in his profession, but spending freely what had come freely, had realized nothing. But, he was confident that he should soon be rich; full of life and ardour, he knew that he should soon have a ship, and soon be on a station that would lead to every thing he wanted. He had always been lucky; he knew he should be so still. Such confidence, powerful in its own warmth, and bewitching in the wit which often expressed it, must have been enough for Anne; but Lady Russell saw it very differently. His sanguine temper, and fearlessness of mind, operated very differently on her. She saw in it but an aggravation of the evil. It only added a dangerous character to himself. He was brilliant,

he was headstrong. Lady Russell had little taste for wit; and of any thing approaching to imprudence a horror. She deprecated the connexion in every light.

"Such opposition, as these feelings produced, was more than Anne could combat. Young and gentle as she was, it might yet have been possible to withstand her father's ill-will, though unsoftened by one kind word or look on the part of her sister; but Lady Russell, whom she had always loved and relied on, could not, with such steadiness of opinion, and such tenderness of manner, be continually advising her in vain. She was persuaded to believe the engagement a wrong thing—indiscreet, improper, hardly capable of success, and not deserving it. But it was not a merely selfish caution, under which she acted, in putting an end to it. Had she not imagined herself consulting his good, even more than her own, she could hardly have given him up. The belief of being prudent and self-denying, principally for *his* advantage, was her chief consolation, under the misery of a parting—a final parting; and every consolation was required, for she had to encounter all the additional pain of opinions, on his side, totally unconvinced and unbending, and of his feeling himself ill-used by so forced a relinquishment. He had left the country in consequence.

"A few months had seen the beginning and the end of their acquaintance; but not with a few months ended Anne's share of suffering from it. Her attachment and regrets had, for a long time, clouded every enjoyment of youth; and an early loss of bloom and spirits had been their lasting effect.

"More than seven years were gone since this little history of sorrowful interest had reached its close; and time had softened down much, perhaps nearly all of peculiar attachment to him,—but she had been too dependent on time alone; no aid had been given in change of place (except in one visit to Bath soon after the rupture), or in any novelty or enlargement of society. No one had ever come within the Kellynch circle, who could bear a comparison with Frederick Wentworth, as he stood in her memory. No second attachment, the only thoroughly natural, happy, and sufficient cure, at her time of life, had been possible to the nice tone of her mind, the fastidiousness of her taste, in the small limits of the society around them. She had been solicited, when about two-and-twenty, to change her name, by the young man, who not long afterwards found a more willing mind

in her younger sister; and Lady Russell had lamented her refusal; for Charles Musgrove was the eldest son of a man, whose landed property and general importance were second, in that country, only to Sir Walter's, and of good character and appearance; and however Lady Russell might have asked yet for something more, while Anne was nineteen, she would have rejoiced to see her at twenty-two, so respectably removed from the partialities and injustice of her father's house, and settled so permanently near herself. But in this case, Anne had left nothing for advice to do; and though Lady Russell, as satisfied as ever with her own discretion, never wished the past undone, she began now to have the anxiety, which borders on hopelessness, for Anne's being tempted, by some man of talents and independence, to enter a state for which she held her to be peculiarly fitted by her warm affections and domestic habits.

"They knew not each other's opinion, either its constancy or its change, on the one leading point of Anne's conduct, for the subject was never alluded to,—but Anne, at seven-and-twenty, thought very differently from what she had been made to think at nineteen.—She did not blame Lady Russell, she did not blame herself for having been guided by her; but she felt that were any young person, in similar circumstances, to apply to her for counsel, they would never receive any of such certain immediate wretchedness, such uncertain future good.—She was persuaded that, under every disadvantage of disapprobation at home, and every anxiety attending his profession, all their probable fears, delays, and disappointments, she should yet have been a happier woman in maintaining the engagement, than she had been in the sacrifice of it; and this, she fully believed, had the usual share, had even more than a usual share of all such solicitudes and suspense been theirs, without reference to the actual results of their case, which, as it happened, would have bestowed earlier prosperity than could be reasonably calculated on. All his sanguine expectations, all his confidence had been justified. His genius and ardour had seemed to foresee and to command his prosperous path. He had, very soon after their engagement ceased, got employ; and all that he had told her would follow, had taken place. He had distinguished himself, and early gained the other step in rank—and must now, by successive captures, have made a handsome fortune. She had only navy lists and newspapers for her authority, but she could not doubt his being rich;—and, in favour of his constancy, she had no reason to believe him married.

"How eloquent could Anne Elliot have been,—how eloquent, at least, were her wishes, on the side of early warm attachment, and a cheerful confidence in futurity, against that over-anxious caution which seems to insult exertion and distrust Providence! —She had been forced into prudence in her youth, she learned romance as she grew older—the natural sequel of an unnatural beginning."—Vol. iii. pp. 57–67.

After an absence of eight years, he returns to her neighbourhood, and circumstances throw them frequently in contact. Nothing can be more exquisitely painted than her feelings on such occasions. First, dread of the meeting,—then, as that is removed by custom, renewed regret for the happiness she has thrown away, and the constantly recurring contrast, though known only to herself, between the distance of their intercourse and her involuntary sympathy with all his feelings, and instant comprehension of all his thoughts, of the meaning of every glance of his eye, and curl of his lip, and intonation of his voice. In him her mild good sense and elegance gradually re-awake long-forgotten attachment; but with it return the usual accompaniments of undeclared love, distrust of her sentiments towards him, and suspicions of their being favourable to another. In this state of regretful jealousy he overhears, while writing a letter, a conversation she is holding with his friend Captain Harville, respecting another naval friend, Captain Benwick, who had been engaged to the sister of the former, and very speedily after her death had formed a fresh engagement; we cannot refrain from inserting an extract from this conversation, which is exquisitely beautiful.

" ' Your feelings may be the strongest,' replied Anne, ' but the same spirit of analogy will authorize me to assert that ours are the most tender. Man is more robust than woman, but he is not longer-lived: which exactly explains my view of the nature of their attachments. Nay, it would be too hard upon you, if it were otherwise. You have difficulties, and privations, and dangers enough to struggle with. You are always labouring and toiling, exposed to every risk and hardship. Your home, country, friends, all quitted. Neither time, nor health, nor life, to be called your own. It would be too hard indeed' (with a faltering voice) ' if woman's feelings were to be added to all this.'

" ' We shall never agree upon this question'—Captain Harville was beginning to say, when a slight noise called their attention to Captain Wentworth's hitherto perfectly quiet division of the room. It was nothing more than that his pen had fallen down, but Anne was startled at finding him nearer than she had supposed, and half inclined to suspect that the pen had only fallen, because he had been occupied by them, striving to catch sounds, which yet she did not think he could have caught.

" ' Have you finished your letter?' said Captain Harville. ' Not quite, a few lines more. I shall have done in five minutes.'

" ' There is no hurry on my side. I am only ready whenever you are.—I am in very good anchorage here' (smiling at Anne), ' well supplied, and want for nothing—No hurry for a signal at all.—Well, Miss Elliot' (lowering his voice), ' as I was saying, we shall never agree I suppose upon this point. No man and woman would, probably. But let me observe that all histories are against you, all stories, prose and verse. If I had such a memory as Benwick, I could bring you fifty quotations in a moment on my side the argument, and I do not think I ever opened a book in my life which had not something to say upon woman's inconstancy. Songs and proverbs, all talk of woman's fickleness. But perhaps you will say, these were all written by men.'

" ' Perhaps I shall. Yes, yes, if you please, no reference to examples in books. Men have had every advantage of us in telling their own story. Education has been theirs in so much higher a degree; the pen has been in their hands. I will not allow books to prove any thing.'

" ' But how shall we prove any thing?'

" ' We never shall. We never can expect to prove any thing upon such a point. It is a difference of opinion which does not admit of proof. We each begin probably with a little bias to-

wards our own sex, and upon that bias build every circumstance in favour of it which has occurred within our own circle; many of which circumstances (perhaps those very cases which strike us the most) may be precisely such as cannot be brought forward without betraying a confidence, or, in some respect, saying what should not be said.'

"'Ah!' cried Captain Harville, in a tone of strong feeling, 'if I could but make you comprehend what a man suffers when he takes a last look at his wife and children, and watches the boat that he has sent them off in, as long as it is in sight, and then turns away and says, 'God knows whether we ever meet again!' And then, if I could convey to you the glow of his soul when he does see them again; when, coming back after a twelvemonth's absence perhaps, and obliged to put into another port, he calculates how soon it will be possible to get them there, pretending to deceive himself, and saying, 'They cannot be here till such a day,' but all the while hoping for them twelve hours sooner, and seeing them arrive at last, as if Heaven had given them wings, by many hours sooner still! If I could explain to you all this, and all that a man can bear and do, and glories to do for the sake of these treasures of his existence! I speak, you know, only of such men as have hearts!' pressing his own with emotion.

"'Oh!' cried Anne, eagerly, 'I hope I do justice to all that is felt by you, and by those who resemble you. God forbid that I should undervalue the warm and faithful feelings of any of my fellow-creatures. I should deserve utter contempt if I dared to suppose that true attachment and constancy were known only by woman. No, I believe you capable of every thing great and good in your married lives. I believe you equal to every important exertion, and to every domestic forbearance, so long as —if I may be allowed the expression, so long as you have an object. I mean, while the woman you love lives, and lives for you. All the privilege I claim for my own sex (it is not a very enviable one, you need not covet it) is that of loving longest, when existence or when hope is gone.'

"She could not immediately have uttered another sentence; her heart was too full, her breath too much oppressed."—Vol. iv. pp. 263–269.

While this conversation has been going on, he has been replying to it on paper, under the appear-

ance of finishing his letter: he puts the paper into her hand, and hurries away.

"I can listen no longer in silence. I must speak to you by such means as are within my reach. You pierce my soul. I am half agony, half hope. Tell me not that I am too late, that such precious feelings are gone for ever. I offer myself to you again with a heart even more your own, than when you almost broke it eight years and a half ago. Dare not say that man forgets sooner than woman, that his love has an earlier death. I have loved none but you. Unjust I may have been, weak and resentful I have been, but never inconstant. You alone have brought me to Bath. For you alone I think and plan.—Have you not seen this? Can you fail to have understood my wishes? —I had not waited even these ten days, could I have read your feelings, as I think you must have penetrated mine. I can hardly write. I am every instant hearing something which overpowers me. You sink your voice, but I can distinguish the tones of that voice, when they would be lost on others.—Too good, too excellent creature! You do us justice indeed. You do believe that there is true attachment and constancy among men. Believe it to be most fervent, most undeviating in

"F. W."

We ventured, in a former article, to remonstrate against the dethronement of the once powerful God of Love, in his own most especial domain, the novel; and to suggest that, in shunning the ordinary fault of recommending by examples a romantic and uncalculating extravagance of passion, Miss Austen had rather fallen into the opposite extreme of exclusively patronizing what are called prudent matches, and too much disparaging sentimental enthusiasm. We urge, that, mischievous as is the extreme on this side, it is not the one into which the young folks of the present day are the most likely to run: the prevailing fault is not now, whatever it may have been, to sacrifice all for love:

" Venit enim magnum donandi parca juventus
Nec tantum Veneris quantum studiosa culinæ."

We may now, without retracting our opinion, bestow unqualified approbation; for the distresses of the present heroine all arise from her prudent refusal to listen to the suggestions of her heart. The catastrophe, however, is happy, and we are left in doubt whether it would have been better for her or not to accept the first proposal; and this we conceive is precisely the proper medium; for, though we would not have prudential calculations the sole principle to be regarded in marriage, we are far from advocating their exclusion. To disregard the advice of sober-minded friends on an important point of conduct, is an imprudence we would by no means recommend; indeed, it is a species of selfishness, if, in listening only to the dictates of passion, a man sacrifices to its gratification the happiness of those most dear to him as well as his own; though it is not now-a-days the most prevalent form of selfishness. But it is no condemnation of a sentiment to say, that it becomes blamable when it interferes with duty, and is uncontrolled by conscience: the desire of riches, power, or distinction—the taste for ease and comfort—are to be condemned when they transgress these bounds; and love, if it keep within them, even though it be somewhat tinged with enthusiasm, and a little at variance with what the worldly call prudence, *i. e.* regard for pecuniary advantage, may afford a better moral discipline to the mind than most other passions. It will not at least be

denied, that it has often proved a powerful stimulus to exertion where others have failed, and has called forth talents unknown before even to the possessor. What, though the pursuit may be fruitless, and the hopes visionary? The result may be a real and substantial benefit, though of another kind; the vineyard may have been cultivated by digging in it for the treasure which is never to be found. What, though the perfections with which imagination has decorated the beloved object, may, in fact, exist but in a slender degree? still they are believed in and admired as real; if not, the love is such as does not merit the name; and it is proverbially true that men become assimilated to the character (*i. e.* what they *think* the character) of the being they fervently adore: thus, as in the noblest exhibitions of the stage, though that which is contemplated be but a fiction, it may be realized in the mind of the beholder; and, though grasping at a cloud, he may become worthy of possessing a real goddess. Many a generous sentiment, and many a virtuous resolution, have been called forth and matured by admiration of one, who may herself perhaps have been incapable of either. It matters not what the object is that a man aspires to be worthy of, and proposes as a model for imitation, if he does but *believe* it to be excellent. Moreover, all doubts of success (and they are seldom, if ever, entirely wanting) must either produce or exercise humility; and the endeavour to study another's interest and inclinations, and prefer them to one's own, may promote a habit of

general benevolence which may outlast the present occasion. Every thing, in short, which tends to abstract a man in any degree, or in any way, from self,—from self-admiration and self-interest, has so far at least, a beneficial influence in forming the character.

On the whole, Miss Austen's works may safely be recommended, not only as among the most unexceptionable of their class, but as combining, in an eminent degree, instruction with amusement, though without the direct effort at the former, of which we have complained, as sometimes defeating its object. For those who cannot, or will not, *learn* any thing from productions of this kind, she has provided entertainment which entitles her to thanks; for mere innocent amusement is in itself a good, when it interferes with no greater: especially as it may occupy the place of some other that may *not* be innocent. The Eastern monarch who proclaimed a reward to him who should discover a new pleasure, would have deserved well of mankind had he stipulated that it should be blameless. Those, again, who delight in the study of human nature, may improve in the knowledge of it, and in the profitable application of that knowledge, by the perusal of such fictions as those before us.

# ARTICLE IX.

## REMARKS ON FRANKENSTEIN.

[*Frankenstein; or, the Modern Prometheus.* 3 *vols.* 12*mo.* *From Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, March,* 1818.]

> " Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay
> To mould me man? Did I solicit thee
> From Darkness to promote me?"——
> *Paradise Lost.*

THIS is a novel, or more properly a romantic fiction, of a nature so peculiar, that we ought to describe the species before attempting any account of the individual production.

The first general division of works of fiction, into such as bound the events they narrate by the actual laws of nature, and such as, passing these limits, are managed by marvellous and supernatural machinery, is sufficiently obvious and decided. But the class of marvellous romances admits of several subdivisions. In the earlier productions of imagination, the poet or tale-teller does not, in his own opinion, transgress the laws of credibility, when he introduces into his narration the witches, goblins,

and magicians, in the existence of which he himself, as well as his hearers, is a firm believer. This good faith, however, passes away, and works turning upon the marvellous are written and read merely on account of the exercise which they afford to the imagination of those who, like the poet Collins, love to riot in the luxuriance of Oriental fiction, to rove through the meanders of enchantment, to gaze on the magnificence of golden palaces, and to repose by the waterfalls of Elysian gardens. In this species of composition, the marvellous is itself the principal and most important object both to the author and reader. To describe its effect upon the mind of the human personages engaged in its wonders, and dragged along by its machinery, is comparatively an inferior object. The hero and heroine, partakers of the supernatural character which belongs to their adventures, walk the maze of enchantment with a firm and undaunted step, and appear as much at their ease, amid the wonders around them, as the young fellow described by the *Spectator*, who was discovered taking a snuff with great composure in the midst of a stormy ocean, represented on the stage of the opera.

A more philosophical and refined use of the supernatural in works of fiction, is proper to that class in which the laws of nature are represented as altered, not for the purpose of pampering the imagination with wonders, but in order to show the probable effect which the supposed miracles would produce on those who witnessed them. In this case, the pleasure ordinarily derived from the marvellous

incidents is secondary to that which we extract from observing how mortals like ourselves would be affected,

> "By scenes like these which, daring to depart
> From sober truth, are still to nature true."

Even in the description of his marvels, however, the author, who manages this style of composition with address, gives them an indirect importance with the reader, when he is able to describe, with nature and with truth, the effects which they are calculated to produce upon his *dramatis personæ*. It will be remembered, that the sapient Partridge was too wise to be terrified at the mere appearance of the ghost of Hamlet, whom he knew to be a man dressed up in pasteboard armour for the nonce: it was when he saw the "little man," as he called Garrick, so frightened, that a sympathetic horror took hold of him. Of this we shall presently produce some examples from the narrative before us. But success in this point is still subordinate to the author's principal object, which is less to produce an effect by means of the marvels of the narrations, than to open new trains and channels of thought, by placing men in supposed situations of an extraordinary and preternatural character, and then describing the mode of feeling and conduct which they are most likely to adopt.

To make more clear the distinction we have endeavoured to draw between the marvellous and the effects of the marvellous, considered as separate objects, we may briefly invite our readers to compare the common tale of *Tom Thumb* with *Gulli-*

*ver's Voyage to Brobdingnag;* one of the most childish fictions, with one which is pregnant with wit and satire, yet both turning upon the same assumed possibility of the existence of a pigmy among a race of giants. In the former case, when the imagination of the story-teller has exhausted itself in every species of hyperbole, in order to describe the diminutive size of his hero, the interest of the tale is at an end; but in the romance of the Dean of St Patrick's, the exquisite humour with which the natural consequences of so strange and unusual a situation is detailed, has a canvass on which to expand itself, as broad as the luxuriance even of the author's talents could desire. Gulliver stuck into a marrow bone, and Master Thomas Thumb's disastrous fall into the bowl of hasty-pudding, are, in the general outline, kindred incidents; but the jest is exhausted in the latter case, when the accident is told; whereas in the former, it lies not so much in the comparatively pigmy size which subjected Gulliver to such a ludicrous misfortune, as in the tone of grave and dignified feeling with which he resents the disgrace of the incident.

In the class of fictitious narrations to which we allude, the author opens a sort of account-current with the reader; drawing upon him, in the first place, for credit to that degree of the marvellous which he proposes to employ; and becoming virtually bound, in consequence of this indulgence, that his personages shall conduct themselves, in the extraordinary circumstances in which they are placed, according to the rules of probability, and

the nature of the human heart. In this view, the *probable* is far from being laid out of sight even amid the wildest freaks of imagination; on the contrary, we grant the extraordinary postulates which the author demands as the foundation of his narrative, only on condition of his deducing the consequences with logical precision.

We have only to add, that this class of fiction has been sometimes applied to the purposes of political satire, and sometimes to the general illustration of the powers and workings of the human mind. Swift, Bergerac, and others, have employed it for the former purpose, and a good illustration of the latter is the well-known *Saint Leon* of William Godwin. In this latter work, assuming the possibility of the transmutation of metals and of the *elixir vitæ*, the author has deduced, in the course of his narrative, the probable consequences of the possession of such secrets upon the fortunes and mind of him who might enjoy them. *Frankenstein* is a novel upon the same plan with *Saint Leon;* it is said to be written by Mr Percy Bysshe Shelley, who, if we are rightly informed, is son-in-law to Mr Godwin;[1] and it is inscribed to that ingenious author.

In the preface, the author lays claim to rank his work among the class which we have endeavoured to describe.

"The event on which this fiction is founded has been supposed by Dr Durwin, and some of the physiological writers of

[1] [The author of *Frankenstein* is Mrs Shelley, daughter of Mr Godwin and Mrs Mary Woolstonecroft. See her *Preface to the last edition.*]

Germany, as not of impossible occurrence. I shall not be supposed as according the remotest degree of serious faith to such an imagination; yet, in assuming it as the basis of a work of fancy, I have not considered myself as merely weaving a series of supernatural terrors. The event, on which the interest of the story depends, is exempt from the disadvantages of a mere tale of spectres or enchantment. It was recommended by the novelty of the situations which it developes; and, however impossible as a physical fact, affords a point of view to the imagination for the delineating of human passions more comprehensive and commanding than any which the ordinary relations of existing events can yield.

"I have thus endeavoured to preserve the truth of the elementary principles of human nature, while I have not scrupled to innovate upon their combinations. The *Iliad*, the tragic poetry of Greece,—Shakspeare, in the *Tempest* and *Midsummer's Night's Dream*,—and most especially Milton, in *Paradise Lost*, conform to this rule; and the most humble novelist, who seeks to confer or receive amusement from his labours, may, without presumption, apply to prose fiction a license, or rather a rule, from the adoption of which so many exquisite combinations of human feeling have resulted in the highest specimens of poetry."

We shall, without farther preface, detail the particulars of the singular story which is thus introduced.

A vessel, engaged in a voyage of discovery to the North Pole, having become embayed among the ice at a very high latitude, the crew, and particularly the captain or owner of the ship, are surprised at perceiving a gigantic form pass at some distance from them, on a car drawn by dogs, in a place where they conceived no mortal could exist. While they are speculating on this singular apparition, a thaw commences, and disengages them from their precarious situation. On the next morning they pick up, upon a floating fragment of the broken ice, a sledge like that they had before

seen, with a human being in the act of perishing. He is with difficulty recalled to life, and proves to be a young man of the most amiable manners and extended acquirements, but extenuated by fatigue, and wrapped in dejection and gloom of the darkest kind. The captain of the ship, a gentleman whose ardent love of science had engaged him on an expedition so dangerous, becomes attached to the stranger, and at length extorts from him the wonderful tale of his misery, which he thus attains the means of preserving from oblivion.

Frankenstein describes himself as a native of Geneva, born and bred up in the bosom of domestic love and affection. His father—his friend Henry Clerval—Elizabeth, an orphan of extreme beauty and talent, bred up in the same house with him, are possessed of all the qualifications which could render him happy as a son, a friend, and a lover. In the course of his studies he becomes acquainted with the works of Cornelius Agrippa, and other authors treating of occult philosophy, on whose venerable tomes modern neglect has scattered no slight portion of dust. Frankenstein remains ignorant of the contempt in which his favourites are held, until he is separated from his family to pursue his studies at the university of Ingolstadt. Here he is introduced to the wonders of modern chemistry, as well as of natural philosophy, in all its branches. Prosecuting these sciences into their innermost and most abstruse recesses, with unusual talent and unexampled success, he at length makes that discovery on which the marvellous part of the

work is grounded. His attention had been especially bound to the structure of the human frame and of the principle of life. He engaged in physiological researches of the most recondite and abstruse nature, searching among charnel vaults and in dissection-rooms, and the objects most insupportable to the delicacy of human feelings, in order to trace the minute chain of causation which takes place in the change from life to death, and from death to life. In the midst of this darkness a light broke in upon him.

" ' Remember,' says his narrative, ' I am not recording the vision of a madman. The sun does not more certainly shine in the heavens than that which I now affirm is true. Some miracle might have produced it, yet the stages of the discovery were distinct and probable. After days and nights of incredible labour and fatigue, I succeeded in discovering the cause of generation and life ; nay, more, I became myself capable of bestowing animation upon lifeless matter.' "

This wonderful discovery impelled Frankenstein to avail himself of his art, by the creation (if we dare to call it so) or formation of a living and sentient being. As the minuteness of the parts formed a great difficulty, he constructed the figure which he proposed to animate of a gigantic size, that is, about eight feet high, and strong and large in proportion. The feverish anxiety with which the young philosopher toils through the horrors of his secret task, now dabbling among the unhallowed relics of the grave, and now torturing the living animal to animate the lifeless clay, are described generally, but with great vigour of language. Al-

though supported by the hope of producing a new species that should bless him as its creator and source, he nearly sinks under the protracted labour, and loathsome details, of the work he had undertaken; and scarcely is his fatal enthusiasm sufficient to support his nerves, or animate his resolution. The result of this extraordinary discovery it would be unjust to give in any words save those of the author. We shall give it at length, as an excellent specimen of the style and manner of the work.

"It was on a dreary night of November that I beheld the accomplishment of my toils. With an anxiety that almost amounted to agony, I collected the instruments of life around me, that I might infuse a spark of being into the lifeless thing that lay at my feet. It was already one in the morning; the rain pattered dismally against the panes, and my candle was nearly burnt out, when, by the glimmer of the half-extinguished light, I saw the dull yellow eye of the creature open; it breathed hard, and a convulsive motion agitated its limbs.

"How can I describe my emotions at this catastrophe, or how delineate the wretch whom with such infinite pains and care I had endeavoured to form? His limbs were in proportion, and I had selected his features as beautiful. Beautiful!—Great God!—His yellow skin scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath; his hair was of a lustrous black, and flowing; his teeth of a pearly whiteness; but these luxuriances only formed a more horrid contrast with his watery eyes, that seemed almost of the same colour as the dun white sockets in which they were set—his shrivelled complexion and straight black lips.

"The different accidents of life are not so changeable as the feelings of human nature. I had worked hard for nearly two years, for the sole purpose of infusing life into an inanimate body. For this I had deprived myself of rest and health. I had desired it with an ardour that far exceeded moderation; but now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart. Unable to endure the aspect of the being I had created, I rushed out of the room, and continued a long time traversing my bed-chamber, unable to com-

pose my mind to sleep. At length lassitude succeeded to the tumult I had before endured; and I threw myself on the bed in my clothes, endeavouring to seek a few moments of forgetfulness. But it was in vain; I slept indeed, but I was disturbed by the wildest dreams. I thought I saw Elizabeth, in the bloom of health, walking in the streets of Ingolstadt. Delighted and surprised, I embraced her; but as I imprinted the first kiss on her lips, they became livid with the hue of death; her features appeared to change, and I thought that I held the corpse of my dead mother in my arms; a shroud enveloped her form, and I saw the grave-worms crawling in the folds of the flannel. I started from my sleep with horror; a cold dew covered my forehead, my teeth chattered, and every limb became convulsed; when, by the dim and yellow light of the moon, as it forced its way through the window-shutters, I beheld the wretch—the miserable monster whom I had created. He held up the curtain of the bed; and his eyes, if eyes they may be called, were fixed on me. His jaws opened, and he muttered some inarticulate sounds, while a grin wrinkled his cheeks. He might have spoken, but I did not hear; one hand was stretched out, seemingly to detain me, but I escaped, and rushed down stairs. I took refuge in the court-yard belonging to the house which I inhabited; where I remained during the rest of the night, walking up and down in the greatest agitation, listening attentively, catching and fearing each sound as if it were to announce the approach of the demoniacal corpse to which I had so miserably given life.

"Oh! no mortal could support the horror of that countenance. A mummy again endued with animation could not be so hideous as that wretch. I had gazed on him while unfinished; he was ugly then; but when those muscles and joints were rendered capable of motion, it became a thing such as even Dante could not have conceived.

"I passed the night wretchedly. Sometimes my pulse beat so quickly and hardly, that I felt the palpitation of every artery; at others, I nearly sank to the ground, through languor and extreme weakness. Mingled with this horror, I felt the bitterness of disappointment: dreams that had been my food and pleasant rest for so long a space, were now become a hell to me; and the change was so rapid, the overthrow so complete!

"Morning, dismal and wet, at length dawned, and discovered, to my sleepless and aching eyes, the church of Ingolstadt, its white steeple and clock, which indicated the sixth hour. The

porter opened the gates of the court, which had that night been my asylum, and I issued into the streets, pacing them with quick steps, as if I sought to avoid the wretch whom I feared every turning of the street would present to my view. I did not dare return to the apartment which I inhabited, but felt impelled to hurry on, although wetted by the rain, which poured from a black and comfortless sky.

"I continued walking in this manner for some time, endeavouring, by bodily exercise, to ease the load that weighed upon my mind. I traversed the streets without any clear conception of where I was or what I was doing. My heart palpitated in the sickness of fear; and I hurried on with irregular steps, not daring to look about me.

> 'Like one who on a lonely road
> Doth walk in fear and dread,
> And, having once turn'd round, walks on,
> And turns no more his head:
> Because he knows a frightful fiend
> Doth close behind him tread.[1]'"

He is relieved by the arrival of the diligence from Geneva, out of which jumps his friend Henry Clerval, who had come to spend a season at the college. Compelled to carry Clerval to his lodgings, which, he supposed, must still contain the prodigious and hideous specimen of his Promethean art, his feelings are again admirably described, allowing always for the extraordinary cause supposed to give them birth.

"I trembled excessively; I could not endure to think of, and far less to allude to, the occurrences of the preceding night. I walked with a quick pace, and we soon arrived at my college. I then reflected, and the thought made me shiver, that the creature whom I had left in my apartment might still be there, alive, and walking about I dreaded to behold this monster; but I feared still more that Henry should see him. Entreating him,

[1] Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner."

therefore, to remain a few minutes at the bottom of the stairs, I darted up towards my own room. My hand was already on the lock of the door before I recollected myself. I then paused; and a cold shivering came over me. I threw the door forcibly open, as children are accustomed to do when they expect a spectre to stand in waiting for them on the other side; but nothing appeared. I stepped fearfully in: the apartment was empty; and my bed-room was also freed from its hideous guest. I could hardly believe that so great a good fortune could have befallen me; but when I became assured that my enemy had indeed fled, I clapped my hands for joy, and ran down to Clerval."

The animated monster is heard of no more for a season. Frankenstein pays the penalty of his rash researches into the *arcana* of human nature, in a long illness, after which the two friends prosecute their studies for two years in uninterrupted quiet. Frankenstein, as may be supposed, abstaining, with a sort of abhorrence, from those in which he had once so greatly delighted. At the lapse of this period, he is made acquainted with a dreadful misfortune which has befallen his family, by the violent death of his youngest brother, an interesting child, who, while straying from his keeper, had been murdered by some villain in the walks of Plainpalais. The marks of strangling were distinct on the neck of the unfortunate infant, and a gold ornament which it wore, and which was amissing, was supposed to have been the murderer's motive for perpetrating the crime.

At this dismal intelligence, Frankenstein flies to Geneva, and impelled by fraternal affection, visits the spot where this horrid accident had happened. In the midst of a thunder-storm, with which the evening had closed, and just as he had attained the

fatal spot on which Victor had been murdered, a flash of lightning displays to him the hideous demon to which he had given life, gliding towards a neighbouring precipice. Another flash shows him hanging among the cliffs, up which he scrambles with far more than mortal agility, and is seen no more. The inference, that this being was the murderer of his brother, flashed on Frankenstein's mind as irresistibly as the lightning itself, and he was tempted to consider the creature whom he had cast among mankind to work, it would seem acts of horror and depravity, nearly in the light of his own vampire let loose from the grave, and destined to destroy all that was dear to him.

Frankenstein was right in his apprehensions. Justine, the maid to whom the youthful Victor had been intrusted, is found to be in possession of the golden trinket which had been taken from the child's person; and, by a combination of circumstantial evidence, she is concluded to be the murderess, and as such condemned to death, and executed. It does not appear that Frankenstein attempted to avert her fate, by communicating his horrible secret; but, indeed, who would have given him credit, or in what manner could he have supported his tale?

In a solitary expedition to the top of Mount Aveyron, undertaken to dispel the melancholy which clouded his mind, Frankenstein unexpectedly meets with the monster he had animated, who compels him to a conference and a parley. The material demon gives an account, at great length,

of his history since his animation, of the mode in which he acquired various points of knowledge, and of the disasters which befell him, when, full of benevolence and philanthropy, he endeavoured to introduce himself into human society. The most material part of his education was acquired in a ruinous pig-sty—a Lyceum which this strange student occupied, he assures us, for a good many months undiscovered, and in constant observance of the motions of an amiable family, from imitating whom, he learns the use of language, and other accomplishments, much more successfully than Caliban, though the latter had a conjuror to his tutor. This detail is not only highly improbable, but it is injudicious, as its unnecessary minuteness tends rather too much to familiarize us with the being whom it regards, and who loses, by this *lengthy* oration, some part of the mysterious sublimity annexed to his first appearance. The result is, this monster, who was at first, according to his own account, but a harmless monster, becomes ferocious and malignant, in consequence of finding all his approaches to human society repelled with injurious violence and offensive marks of disgust. Some papers concealed in his dress, acquainted him with the circumstances and person to whom he owed his origin; and the hate which he felt towards the whole human race was now concentrated in resentment against Frankenstein. In this humour he murdered the child, and disposed the picture so as to induce a belief of Justine's guilt. The last is an inartificial circumstance; this indirect mode of

mischief was not likely to occur to the being the narrative presents to us. The conclusion of this strange narrative is, a peremptory demand on the part of the demon, as he is usually termed, that Frankenstein should renew his fearful experiment, and create for him an helpmate hideous as himself, who should have no pretence for shunning his society. On this condition he promises to withdraw to some distant desert, and shun the human race for ever. If his creator shall refuse him this consolation, he vows the prosecution of the most frightful vengeance. Frankenstein, after a long pause of reflection, imagines he sees that the justice due to the miserable being, as well as to mankind, who might be exposed to so much misery, from the power and evil dispositions of a creature who could climb perpendicular cliffs, and exist among glaciers, demanded that he should comply with the request; and granted his promise accordingly.

Frankenstein retreats to one of the distant islands of the Orcades, that in secrecy and solitude he might resume his detestable and ill-omened labours, which now were doubly hideous, since he was deprived of the enthusiasm with which he formerly prosecuted them. As he is sitting one night in his laboratory, and recollecting the consequences of his first essay in the Promethean art, he begins to hesitate concerning the right he had to form another being as malignant and blood-thirsty as that he had unfortunately already animated. It is evident, that, he would thereby give the demon the means of propagating a hideous race, superior to mankind in

strength and hardihood, who might render the very existence of the present human race a condition precarious and full of terror. Just as these reflections lead him to the conclusion that his promise was criminal, and ought not to be kept, he looks up, and sees, by the light of the moon, the demon at the casement.

"A ghastly grin wrinkled his lips as he gazed on me, where I sat fulfilling the task which he allotted to me. Yes, he had followed me in my travels; he had loitered in forests, hid himself in caves, or taken refuge in wide and desert heaths; and he now came to mark my progress, and claim the fulfilment of my promise.

"As I looked on him, his countenance expressed the utmost extent of malice and treachery. I thought with a sensation of madness on my promise of creating another like to him, and, trembling with passion, tore to pieces the thing on which I was engaged. The wretch saw me destroy the creature on whose future existence he depended for happiness, and, with a howl of devilish despair and revenge, withdrew."

At a subsequent interview, described with the same wild energy, all treaty is broken off betwixt Frankenstein and the work of his hands, and they part on terms of open and declared hatred and defiance. Our limits do not allow us to trace in detail the progress of the demon's vengeance, Clerval falls its first victim, and under circumstances which had very nearly conducted the new Prometheus to the gallows as his supposed murderer Elizabeth, his bride, is next strangled on her wedding-night; his father dies of grief; and at length Frankenstein, driven to despair and distraction, sees nothing left for him in life but vengeance on the singular cause of his misery. With this purpose

he pursues the monster from clime to clime, receiving only such intimations of his being on the right scent, as served to show that the demon delighted in thus protracting his fury and his sufferings. At length, after the flight and pursuit had terminated among the frost-fogs and icy islands of the northern ocean, and just when he had a glimpse of his adversary, the ground sea was heard, the ice gave way, and Frankenstein was placed in the perilous situation in which he is first introduced to the reader.

Exhausted by his sufferings, but still breathing vengeance against the being which was at once his creature and his persecutor, this unhappy victim to physiological discovery expires, just as the clearing away of the ice permits Captain Walton's vessel to hoist sail for their return to Britain. At midnight, the demon, who had been his destroyer, is discovered in the cabin, lamenting over the corpse of the person who gave him being. To Walton he attempts to justify his resentment towards the human race, while, at the same time, he acknowledges himself a wretch who had murdered the lovely and the helpless, and pursued to irremediable ruin his creator, the select specimen of all that was worthy of love and admiration.

"'Fear not,' he continues, addressing the astonished Walton, 'that I shall be the instrument of future mischief. My work is nearly complete. Neither yours nor any man's death is needed to consummate the series of my being, and accomplish that which must be done; but it requires my own. Do not think that I shall be slow to perform this sacrifice. I shall quit your vessel on the ice-raft which brought me hither, and shall seek the most northern extremity of the globe; I shall collect my funeral pile,

and consume to ashes this miserable frame, that its remains may afford no light to any curious and unhallowed wretch, who would create such another as I have been'———

"He sprung from the cabin-window, as he said this, upon the ice-raft which lay close to the vessel. He was soon borne away by the waves, and lost in darkness and distance."

**Whether this singular being executed his purpose or not, must necessarily remain an uncertainty, unless the voyage of discovery to the north pole** should throw any light on the subject.

So concludes this extraordinary tale, in which the author seems to us to disclose uncommon powers of poetic imagination. The feeling with which we perused the unexpected and fearful, yet, allowing the possibility of the event, very natural conclusion of Frankenstein's experiment, shook a little even our firm nerves; although such, and so numerous have been the expedients for exciting terror employed by the romantic writers of the age, that the reader may adopt Macbeth's words with a slight alteration:

> "We have supp'd full with horrors;
> Direness, familiar to our 'callous' thoughts,
> Cannot once startle us."

It is no slight merit in our eyes, that the tale, though wild in incident, is written in plain and forcible English, without exhibiting that mixture of hyperbolical Germanisms with which tales of wonder are usually told, as if it were necessary that the language should be as extravagant as the fiction. The ideas of the author are always clearly as well as forcibly expressed; and his descriptions of landscape have in them the choice requisites of truth,

freshness, precision, and beauty. The self-education of the monster, considering the slender opportunities of acquiring knowledge that he possessed, we have already noticed as improbable and overstrained. That he should have not only learned to speak, but to read, and, for aught we know, to write —that he should have become acquainted with *Werter*, with *Plutarch's Lives*, and with *Paradise Lost*, by listening through a hole in a wall, seems as unlikely as that he should have acquired, in the same way, the problems of *Euclid*, or the art of book-keeping by single and double entry. The author has however two apologies—the first, the necessity that his monster should acquire those endowments, and the other, that his neighbours were engaged in teaching the language of the country to a young foreigner. His progress in self-knowledge, and the acquisition of information, is, after all, more wonderful than that of *Hai Eben Yokhdan*, or *Automathes*, or the hero of the little romance called *The Child of Nature*, one of which works might perhaps suggest the train of ideas followed by the author of *Frankenstein*. We should also be disposed, in support of the principles with which we set out, to question whether the monster, how tall, agile, and strong however, could have perpetrated so much mischief undiscovered; or passed through so many countries without being secured, either on account of his crimes, or for the benefit of some such speculator as Mr Polito, who would have been happy to have added to his museum so curious a specimen of natural history.

But as we have consented to admit the leading incident of the work, perhaps some of our readers may be of opinion, that to stickle upon lesser improbabilities, is to incur the censure bestowed by the Scottish proverb on those who "start at straws, after swallowing *windlings*."

The following lines which occur in the second volume, mark, we think, that the author possesses the same facility in expressing himself in verse as in prose.

> "We rest; a dream has power to poison sleep.
> We rise; one wand'ring thought pollutes the day.
> We feel, conceive, or reason; laugh, or weep,
> Embrace fond wo, or cast our cares away;
> It is the same; for, be it joy or sorrow,
> The path of its departure still is free.
> Man's yesterday may ne'er be like his morrow;
> Nought may endure but mutability!"

Upon the whole, the work impresses us with a high idea of the author's original genius and happy power of expression. We shall be delighted to hear that he has aspired to the *paulo majora;* and, in the mean time congratulate our readers upon a novel which excites new reflections and untried sources of emotion. If Gray's definition of Paradise, to lie on a couch, namely, and read new novels, come any thing near truth, no small praise is due to him, who, like the author of *Frankenstein*, has enlarged the sphere of that fascinating enjoyment.

# ARTICLE X.

## NOVELS OF ERNEST THEODORE HOFFMANN.

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No source of romantic fiction, and no mode of exciting the feelings of interest which the authors in that description of literature desire to produce, seems more directly accessible than the love of the supernatural. It is common to all classes of mankind, and perhaps is to none so familiar as to those who assume a certain degree of scepticism on the subject; since the reader may have often observed in conversation, that the person who professes himself most incredulous on the subject of marvellous stories, often ends his remarks by indulging the company with some well-attested anecdote, which it is difficult or impossible to account for on the narrator's own principles of absolute scepticism. The belief itself, though easily capable of being pushed into superstition and absurdity, has its origin not only

in the facts upon which our holy religion is founded, but upon the principles of our nature, which teach us that while we are probationers in this sublunary state, we are neighbours to, and encompassed by the shadowy world, of which our mental faculties are too obscure to comprehend the laws, our corporeal organs too coarse and gross to perceive the inhabitants.

All professors of the Christian religion believe that there was a time when the Divine Power showed itself more visibly on earth than in these our latter days; controlling and suspending, for its own purposes, the ordinary laws of the universe; and the Roman Catholic Church, at least, holds it as an article of faith, that miracles descend to the present time. Without entering into that controversy, it is enough that a firm belief in the great truths of our religion has induced wise and good men, even in Protestant countries, to subscribe to Dr Johnson's doubts respecting supernatural appearances.

"That the dead are seen no more, said Imlac, I will not undertake to maintain against the concurrent and unvaried testimony of all ages, and of all nations. There is no people, rude or learned, among whom apparitions of the dead are not related and believed. This opinion, which perhaps prevails as far as human nature is diffused, could become universal only by its truth; those that never heard of one another, could not have agreed in a tale which nothing but experience can make credible. That it is doubted by single cavillers, can very little weaken the general evidence; and some who deny it with their tongues, confess it by their fears."

Upon such principles as these there lingers in the breasts even of philosophers, a reluctance to

decide dogmatically upon a point where they do not and cannot possess any, save negative, evidence. Yet this inclination to believe in the marvellous gradually becomes weaker. (Men cannot but remark that (since the scriptural miracles have ceased) the belief in prodigies and supernatural events has gradually declined in proportion to the advancement of human knowledge; and that since the age has become enlightened, the occurrence of tolerably well-attested anecdotes of the supernatural character are so few, as to render it more probable that the witnesses have laboured under some strange and temporary delusion, rather than that the laws of nature have been altered or suspended.) At this period of human knowledge, the marvellous is so much identified with fabulous, as to be considered generally as belonging to the same class.

It is not so in early history, which is full of supernatural incidents; and although we now use the word *romance* as synonymous with fictitious composition, yet as it originally only meant a poem, or prose work contained in the Romaunce language, there is little doubt that the doughty chivalry who listened to the songs of the minstrel, "held each strange tale devoutly true," and that the feats of knighthood which he recounted, mingled with tales of magic and supernatural interference, were esteemed as veracious as the legends of the monks, to which they bore a strong resemblance. This period of society, however, must have long past before the Romancer began to select and

arrange with care, the nature of the materials out of which he constructed his story. It was not when society, however differing in degree and station, was levelled and confounded by one dark cloud of ignorance, involving the noble as well as the mean, that it need be scrupulously considered to what class of persons the author addressed himself, or with what species of decoration he ornamented his story. "Homo was then a common name for all men," and all were equally pleased with the same style of composition. This, however, was gradually altered. As the knowledge to which we have before alluded made more general progress, it became impossible to detain the attention of the better instructed class by the simple and gross fables to which the present generation would only listen in childhood, though they had been held in honour by their fathers during youth, manhood, and old age.

It was also discovered that the supernatural in fictitious composition requires to be managed with considerable delicacy, as criticism begins to be more on the alert. The interest which it excites is indeed a powerful spring; but it is one which is peculiarly subject to be exhausted by coarse handling and repeated pressure. It is also of a character which it is extremely difficult to sustain, and of which a very small proportion may be said to be better than the whole. The marvellous, more than any other attribute of fictitious narrative, loses its effect by being brought much into view. The imagination of the reader is to be excited if possible,

without being gratified. If once, like Macbeth, we "sup full with horrors," our taste for the banquet is ended, and the thrill of terror with which we hear or read of a night-shriek, becomes lost in that sated indifference with which the tyrant came at length to listen to the most deep catastrophes that could affect his house. The incidents of a supernatural character are usually those of a dark and undefinable nature, such as arise in the mind of the Lady in the *Masque of Comus*,—incidents to which our fears attach more consequence, as we cannot exactly tell what it is we behold, or what is to be apprehended from it:—

> "A thousand fantasies
> Begin to throng into my memory,
> Of calling shapes and beck'ning shadows dire,
> And airy tongues that syllable men's names
> On sands, and shores, and desert wildernesses."

Burke observes upon obscurity, that it is necessary to make any thing terrible, and notices, "how much the notions of ghosts and goblins, of which none can form clear ideas, affect minds which give credit to the popular tales concerning such sorts of beings." He represents also, that no person "seems better to have understood the secret of heightening, or of setting terrible things in their strongest light, by the force of a judicious obscurity, than Milton. His description of Death, in the second book, is admirably studied; it is astonishing with what a gloomy pomp, with what a significant and expressive uncertainty of strokes and colouring, he has finished the portrait of the King of Terrors.

'The other shape,—
If shape it might be called, which shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb:
Or substance might be called that shadow seemed,—
For each seemed either; black he stood as night;
Fierce as ten furies; terrible as hell;
And shook a deadly dart. What seemed his head
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.'

In this description all is dark, uncertain, confused, terrible, and sublime to the last degree."

The only quotation worthy to be mentioned along with the passage we have just taken down, is the well-known apparition introduced with circumstances of terrific obscurity in the book of Job:—

"Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ears received a little thereof. In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men, fear came upon me, and trembling which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face: the hair of my flesh stood up. It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof; an image was before mine eyes; there was silence, and I heard a voice."

From these sublime and decisive authorities, it is evident that the exhibition of supernatural appearances in fictitious narrative ought to be rare, brief, indistinct, and such as may become a being to us so incomprehensible, and so different from ourselves, of whom we cannot justly conjecture whence he comes, or for what purpose, and of whose attributes we can have no regular or distinct perception. (Hence it usually happens, that the first touch of the supernatural is always the most effective, and is rather weakened and defaced, than strengthened, by the subsequent recurrence of similar incidents.) (Even in *Hamlet*, the second

entrance of the ghost is not nearly so impressive as the first; and in many romances to which we could refer, the supernatural being forfeits all claim both to our terror and veneration, by condescending to appear too often; to mingle too much in the events of the story, and above all, to become loquacious, or, as it is familiarly called, *chatty*. We have, indeed, great doubts whether an author acts wisely in permitting his goblin to speak at all, if at the same time he renders him subject to human sight. Shakspeare, indeed, has contrived to put such language in the mouth of the buried majesty of Denmark as befits a supernatural being, and is by the style distinctly different from that of the living persons in the drama. In another passage he has had the boldness to intimate, by two expressions of similar force, in what manner, and with what tone supernatural beings would find utterance:

> "And the sheeted dead
> Did *squeak* and *gibber* in the Roman streets."

But the attempt, in which the genius of Shakspeare has succeeded would probably have been ridiculous in any meaner hand; and hence it is, that in many of our modern tales of terror, our feelings of fear have, long before the conclusion, given way under the influence of that familiarity which begets contempt.

A sense that the effect of the supernatural in its more obvious application is easily exhausted, has occasioned the efforts of modern authors to cut new walks and avenues through the enchanted

wood, and to revive, if possible, by some means or other, the fading impression of its horrors.

The most obvious and inartificial mode of attaining this end is, by adding to, and exaggerating the supernatural incidents of the tale. But far from increasing its effect, the principles which we have laid down, incline us to consider the impression as usually weakened by exaggerated and laborious description. Elegance is in such cases thrown away, and the accumulation of superlatives, with which the narrative is encumbered, renders it tedious, or perhaps ludicrous, instead of becoming impressive or grand.

There is indeed one style of composition, of which the supernatural forms an appropriate part, which applies itself rather to the fancy than to the imagination, and aims more at amusing than at affecting or interesting the reader. To this species of composition belong the Eastern tales, which contribute so much to the amusement of our youth, and which are recollected, if not re-perused, with so much pleasure in our more advanced life. There are but few readers, of any imagination, who have not at one time or other in their life sympathized with the poet Collins, "who," says Dr Johnson, "was eminently delighted with those flights of imagination, which pass the bounds of nature, and to which the mind is reconciled only by a passive acquiescence in popular traditions. He loved fairies, genii, giants, and monsters; he delighted to rove through the meadows of enchantment, to gaze on the magnificence of golden palaces, to repose by

the waterfalls of Elysian gardens." It is chiefly the young and the indolent who love to be soothed by works of this character, which require little attention in the perusal. In our riper age, we remember them as we do the joys of our infancy, rather because we loved them once, than that they still continue to afford us amusement. The extravagance of fiction loses its charms for our riper judgment; and notwithstanding that these wild fictions contain much that is beautiful and full of fancy, yet still, unconnected as they are with each other, and conveying no result to the understanding, we pass them by as the championess Britomart rode along the rich strand.

> "Which as she overwent,
> She saw bestrewed all with rich array
> Of pearls and precious stones of great assay,
> And all the gravel mixt with golden ore:
> Whereat she wondered much, but would not stay
> For gold, or pearls, or precious stones, one hour:
> But them despised all, for all was in her power."

With this class of supernatural composition may be ranked, though inferior in interest, what the French call *Contes des Fées*; meaning, by that title, to distinguish them from the ordinary popular tales of fairy folks which are current in most countries. The *Conte des Fées* is itself a very different composition, and the fairies engaged are of a separate class from those whose amusement is to dance round the mushroom in the moonlight, and mislead the belated peasant. The French *Fée* more nearly resembles the Peri of Eastern, or the Fata of Italian poetry. She is a superior being, having the

nature of an elementary spirit, and possessing magical powers enabling her, to a considerable extent, to work either good or evil. But whatever merit this species of writing may have attained in some dexterous hands, it has, under the management of others, become one of the most absurd, flat, and insipid possible. Out of the whole *Cabinet des Fées*, when we get beyond our old acquaintances of the nursery, we can hardly select five volumes, from nearly fifty, with any probability of receiving pleasure from them.

It often happens that when any particular style becomes somewhat antiquated and obsolete, some caricature, or satirical imitation of it, gives rise to a new species of composition. Thus the English Opera arose from the parody upon the Italian stage, designed by Gay, in the *Beggar's Opera*. In like manner, when the public had been inundated, *ad nauseam*, with Arabian tales, Persian tales, Turkish tales, Mogul tales, and legends of every nation east of the Bosphorus, and were equally annoyed by the increasing publication of all sorts of fairy tales,—Count Anthony Hamilton, like a second Cervantes, came forth with his satirical tales, destined to overturn the empire of Dives, of Genii, of Peris, *et hoc genus omne*.

Something too licentious for a more refined age, the Tales of Count Hamilton subsist as a beautiful illustration, showing that literary subjects, as well as the fields of the husbandman, may, when they seem most worn out and *effête*, be renewed and again brought into successful cultivation by a new

course of management. The wit of Count Hamilton, like manure applied to an exhausted field, rendered the Eastern tale more piquant, if not more edifying, than it was before. Much was written in imitation of Count Hamilton's style; and it was followed by Voltaire in particular, who in this way rendered the supernatural romance one of the most apt vehicles for circulating his satire. This, therefore, may be termed the comic side of the supernatural, in which the author plainly declares his purpose to turn into jest the miracles which he relates, and aspires to awaken ludicrous sensations without affecting the fancy—far less exciting the passions of the reader. By this species of delineation the reader will perceive that the supernatural style of writing is entirely travestied and held up to laughter, instead of being made the subject of respectful attention, or heard with at least that sort of imperfect excitement with which we listened to a marvellous tale of fairy-land. This species of satire—for it is often converted to satirical purposes—has never been more happily executed than by the French authors, although Wieland, and several other German writers, treading in the steps of Hamilton, have added the grace of poetry to the wit and to the wonders with which they have adorned this species of composition. Oberon, in particular, has been identified with our literature by the excellent translation of Mr Sotheby, and is nearly as well known in England as in Germany. It would, however, carry us far too wide from our present purpose, were we to consider the comi-

heroic poetry which belongs to this class, and which includes the well-known works of Pulci, Berni—perhaps, in a certain degree, of Ariosto himself, who, in some passages at least, lifts his knightly vizor so far as to give a momentary glimpse of the smile which mantles upon his countenance.

One general glance at the geography of this most pleasing " Londe of Faery," leads us into another province, rough as it may seem and uncultivated, but which, perhaps, on that very account, has some scenes abounding in interest. There are a species of antiquarians who, while others laboured to reunite and highly ornament the ancient traditions of their country, have made it their business, *antiquos accedere fontes*, to visit the ancient springs and sources of those popular legends which, cherished by the grey and superstitious Elde, had been long forgotten in the higher circles, but are again brought forward, and claim, like the old ballads of a country, a degree of interest even from their rugged simplicity. The *Deutsche Sagen* of the brothers Grimm, is an admirable work of this kind; assembling, without any affectation either of ornamental diction or improved incident, the various traditions existing in different parts of Germany respecting popular superstitions and the events ascribed to supernatural agency. There are other works of the same kind, in the same language, collected with great care and apparent fidelity. Sometimes trite, sometimes tiresome, sometimes childish, the legends which these authors have collected with such indefatigable zeal form nevertheless a step in the history

of the human race; and, when compared with similar collections in other countries, seem to infer traces of a common descent which has placed one general stock of superstition within reach of the various tribes of mankind. What are we to think when we find the Jutt and the Fin telling their children the same traditions which are to be found in the nurseries of the Spaniard and Italian; or when we recognise in our own instance the traditions of Ireland or Scotland as corresponding with those of Russia? Are we to suppose that their similarity arises from the limited nature of human invention, and that the same species of fiction occurs to the imaginations of different authors in remote countries as the same species of plants are found in different regions without the possibility of their having been propagated by transportation from the one to others? Or ought we rather, to refer them to a common source, when mankind formed but the same great family, and suppose that as philologists trace through various dialects the broken fragments of one general language, so antiquaries may recognise in distant countries parts of what was once a common stock of tradition? We will not pause on this enquiry, nor observe more than generally that, in collecting these traditions, the industrious editors have been throwing light, not only on the history of their own country in particular, but on that of mankind in general. There is generally some truth mingled with the abundant falsehood, and still more abundant exaggeration, of the oral legend; and it may be frequently and unexpectedly found to con-

firm or confute the meagre statement of some ancient chronicle. Often, too, the legend of the common people, by assigning peculiar features, localities, and specialities to the incidents which it holds in memory, gives life and spirit to the frigid and dry narrative which tells the fact alone, without the particulars which render it memorable or interesting.

It is, however, in another point of view, that we wish to consider those popular traditions in their collected state: namely, as a peculiar mode of exhibiting the marvellous and supernatural in composition. And here we must acknowledge, that he who peruses a large collection of stories of fiends, ghosts, and prodigies, in hopes of exciting in his mind that degree of shuddering interest approaching to fear, which is the most valuable triumph of the supernatural, is likely to be disappointed. A whole collection of ghost stories inclines us as little to fear as a jest book moves us to laughter. Many narratives, turning upon the same interest, are apt to exhaust it; as in a large collection of pictures an ordinary eye is so dazzled with the variety of brilliant or glowing colours as to become less able to distinguish the merit of those pieces which are possessed of any.

But, notwithstanding this great disadvantage, which is inseparable from the species of publication we are considering, a reader of imagination, who has the power to emancipate himself from the chains of reality, and to produce in his own mind the accompaniments with which the simple or rude

popular legend ought to be attended, will often find that it possesses points of interest, of nature, and of effect, which, though irreconcilable to sober truth, carry with them something that the mind is not averse to believe, something in short of plausibility, which, let poet or romancer do their very best, they find it impossible to attain to. An example may, in a case of this sort, be more amusing to the reader than mere disquisition, and we select one from a letter received many years since from an amiable and accomplished nobleman some time deceased, not more distinguished for his love of science, than his attachment to literature in all its branches :—

" It was in the night of, I think, the 14th of February, 1799, that there came on a dreadful storm of wind and drifting snow from the south-east, which was felt very severely in most parts of Scotland. On the preceding day a Captain M——, attended by three other men, had gone out a deer-shooting in that extensive tract of mountains which lies to the west of Dalnacardoch. As they did not return in the evening, nothing was heard of them. The next day, people were sent out in quest of them, as soon as the storm abated. After a long search, the bodies were found in a lifeless state, lying among the ruins of a *bothy* (a temporary hut,) in which it would seem Captain M—— and his party had taken refuge. The bothy had been destroyed by the tempest, and in a very astonishing manner. It had been built partly of stone, and partly of strong wooden uprights driven into the ground; it was not merely blown down, but quite torn to pieces. Large stones, which had formed part of the walls, were found lying at the distance of one or two hundred yards from the site of the building, and the wooden uprights appeared to have been rent asunder by force that had twisted them off as in breaking a tough stick. From the circumstances in which the bodies were found, it appeared that the men were retiring to rest at the time the calamity came upon them. One of the bodies indeed, was found at a distance of many yards from the bothy; another

of the men was found upon the place where the bothy had stood, with one stocking off, as if he had been undressing; Captain M—— was lying without his clothes, upon the wretched bed which the bothy had afforded, his face to the ground, and his knees drawn up. To all appearance the destruction had been quite sudden: yet the situation of the building was such as promised security against the utmost violence of the wind. It stood in a narrow recess, at the foot of a mountain, whose precipitous and lofty declivities sheltered it on every side, except in the front, and here, too, a hill rose before it, though with a more gradual slope. This extraordinary wreck of a building so situated, led the common people to ascribe it to a supernatural power. It was recollected by some who had been out shooting with Captain M—— about a month before, that while they were resting at this bothy, a shepherd lad had come to the door and enquired for Captain M——, and that the captain went out with the shepherd, and they walked away together, leaving the rest of the party in the bothy. After a time, Captain M—— returned alone; he said nothing of what had passed between him and the lad, but looked very grave and thoughtful, and from that time there was observed to be a mysterious anxiety hanging about him. It was remembered, that one evening after dusk, when Captain M—— was in the bothy, some of his party that were standing before the door saw a fire blazing on the top of the hill which rises in front of it. They were much surprised to see a fire in such a solitary place, and at such a time, and set out to enquire into the cause of it, but when they reached the top of the hill, there was no fire to be seen! It was remembered, too, that on the day before the fatal night, Captain M—— had shown a singular obstinacy in going forth upon his expedition. No representations of the inclemency of the weather, and of the dangers he would be exposed to, could restrain him. He said he *must* go, and was resolved to go. Captain M.'s character was likewise remembered; that he was popularly reported to be a man of no principles, rapacious, and cruel; that he had got money by procuring recruits from the Highlands—an unpopular mode of acquiring wealth; and that, amongst other base measures for this purpose, he had gone so far as to leave a purse upon the road, and to threaten the man who had picked it up with an indictment for robbery if he did not enlist.[1] Our informer added nothing

[1] It is needless to say that this was a mere popular report, which might greatly misrepresent the character of the unfortunate sufferer.

more ; he neither told us his own opinion nor that of the country ; but left it to our own notions of the manner in which good and evil is rewarded in this life, to suggest the Author of the miserable event. He seemed impressed with superstitious awe on the subject, and said, 'There was na' the like seen in a' Scotland.' The man is far advanced in years, and is a schoolmaster in the neighbourhood of Rannoch. He was employed by us as a guide upon Schehallion ; and he told us the story one day as we walked before our horses, while we slowly wound up the road on the northern declivity of Rannoch. From this elevated ground we commanded an extensive prospect over the dreary mountains to the north, and amongst them our guide pointed out that at the foot of which was the scene of his dreadful tale. The account is, to the best of my recollection, just what I received from my guide. In some trifling particulars, from defect of memory, I may have misrepresented or added a little, in order to connect the leading circumstances ; and I fear, also, that something may have been forgotten. Will you ask Mr P—— whether Captain M——, on leaving the bothy after his conversation with the shepherd lad, did not say that he must return there in a month after ? I have a faint idea that it was so ; and, if true, it would be a pity to lose it. Mr P—— may, perhaps, be able to correct or enlarge my account for you in other instances.'

The reader will, we believe, be of our opinion, that the feeling of superstitious awe annexed to the catastrophe contained in this interesting narrative, could not have been improved by any circumstances of additional horror which a poet could have invented ; that the incidents and the gloomy simplicity of the narrative are much more striking than they could have been rendered by the most glowing description ; and that the old Highland schoolmaster, the outline of whose tale is so judiciously preserved by the narrator, was a better medium for communicating such a tale than would have been the form of Ossian, could he have arisen from the dead on purpose.

It may, however, be truly said of the muse of romantic fiction,

"Mille habet ornatus."

The Professor Musaeus, and others of what we may call his school, conceiving, perhaps, that the simplicity of the unadorned popular legend was like to obstruct its popularity, and feeling, as we formerly observed, that though individual stories are sometimes exquisitely impressive, yet collections of this kind were apt to be rather bald and heavy, employed their talents in ornamenting them with incident, in ascribing to the principal agents a peculiar character, and rendering the marvellous more interesting by the individuality of those in whose history it occurs. Two volumes were transcribed from the *Volksmarchen* of Musaeus by the late Dr Beddoes, and published under the title of *Popular Tales of the Germans*, which may afford the English reader a good idea of the style of that interesting work. It may, indeed, be likened to the Tales of Count Anthony Hamilton already mentioned, but there is great room for distinction. "*Le Belier*," and "*Fleur d'Epine*," are mere parodies arising out of the fancy, but indebted for their interest to his wit. Musaeus, on the other hand, takes the narration of the common legend, dresses it up after his own fashion, and describes, according to his own pleasure, the personages of his drama. Hamilton is a cook who compounds his whole banquet out of materials used for the first time; Musaeus brings forward ancient traditions, like yesterday's cold meat from the larder, and, by dint

of skill and seasoning, gives it a new relish for the meal of to-day. Of course the merit of the *rifacimento* will fall to be divided in this case betwixt the effect attained by the ground-work of the story, and that which is added by the art of the narrator. In the tale, for example, of the *Child of Wonder*, what may be termed the raw material is short, simple, and scarce rising beyond the wonders of a nursery tale, but it is so much enlivened by the vivid sketch of the selfish old father who barters his four daughters against golden eggs and sacks of pearls, as to give an interest and zest to the whole story. *The Spectre Barber* is another of these popular tales, which, in itself singular and fantastic, becomes lively and interesting from the character of a good-humoured, well-meaning, thick-sculled burgher of Bremen, whose wit becomes sharpened by adversity, till he learns gradually to improve circumstances as they occur, and at length recovers his lost prosperity by dint of courage, joined with some degree of acquired sagacity.

A still different management of the wonderful and supernatural has, in our days, revived the romance of the earlier age with its history and its antiquities. The Baron de la Motte Fouqué has distinguished himself in Germany by a species of writing which requires at once the industry of the scholar, and the talents of the man of genius. The efforts of this accomplished author aim at a higher mood of composition than the more popular romancer. He endeavours to recall the history, the mythology, the manners of former ages, and to offer

to the present time a graphic description of those which have passed away. The travels of Thioldolf, for example, initiate the reader into that immense storehouse of Gothic superstition which is to be found in the Edda and the Sagas of northern nations; and to render the bold, honest, courageous character of his gallant young Scandinavian the more striking, the author has contrasted it forcibly with the chivalry of the south, over which he asserts its superiority. In some of his works the baron has, perhaps, been somewhat profuse of his historical and antiquarian lore; he wanders where the reader has not skill to follow him; and we lose interest in the piece because we do not comprehend the scenes through which we are conducted. This is the case with some of the volumes where the interest turns on the ancient German history, to understand which, a much deeper acquaintance with the antiquities of that dark period is required than is like to be found in most readers. It would, we think, be a good rule in this style of composition, were the author to confine his historical materials to such as are either generally understood as soon as mentioned, or at least can be explained with brief trouble in such a degree as to make a reader comprehend the story. Of such happy and well-chosen subjects, the Baron de la Motte Fouqué has also shown great command on other occasions. His story of *Sintram and his Followers* is in this respect admirable; and the tale of his *Naiad, Nixie, or Water-Nymph*, is exquisitely beautiful. The distress of the tale—and, though relating to a fantastic being, it is *real distress*—

arises thus. An elementary spirit renounces her right of freedom from human passion to become the spouse of a gallant young knight, who requites her with infidelity and ingratitude. The story is the contrast at once, and the *pendant* to the *Diable Amoureux* of Cazotte, but is entirely free from a tone of *polissonnerie* which shocks good taste in its very lively prototype.

The range of the romance, as it has been written by this profusely inventive author, extends through the half-illumined ages of ancient history into the Cimmerian frontiers of vague tradition; and, when traced with a pencil of so much truth and spirit as that of Fouqué, affords scenes of high interest, and forms, it cannot be doubted, the most legitimate species of romantic fiction, approaching in some measure to the epic in poetry, and capable in a high degree of exhibiting similar beauties.

We have thus slightly traced the various modes in which the wonderful and supernatural may be introduced into fictitious narrative; yet the attachment of the Germans to the mysterious has invented another species of composition, which, perhaps, could hardly have made its way in any other country or language. This may be called the FANTASTIC mode of writing,—in which the most wild and unbounded license is given to an irregular fancy, and all species of combination, however ludicrous, or however shocking, are attempted and executed without scruple. In the other modes of treating the supernatural, even that mystic region is subjected to some laws, however slight; and fancy, in

wandering through it, is regulated by some probabilities in the wildest flight. Not so in the fantastic style of composition, which has no restraint save that which it may ultimately find in the exhausted imagination of the author. This style bears the same proportion to the more regular romance, whether ludicrous or serious, which Farce, or rather Pantomime, maintains to Tragedy and Comedy. Sudden transformations are introduced of the most extraordinary kind, and wrought by the most inadequate means; no attempt is made to soften their absurdity, or to reconcile their inconsistencies; the reader must be contented to look upon the gambols of the author as he would behold the flying leaps and incongruous transmutations of Harlequin, without seeking to discover either meaning or end further than the surprise of the moment.

Our English severity of taste will not easily adopt this wild and fantastic tone into our own literature; nay, perhaps will scarce tolerate it in translations. The only composition which approaches to it is the powerful romance of *Frankenstein*, and there, although the formation of a thinking and sentient being by scientific skill is an incident of the fantastic character, still the interest of the work does not turn upon the marvellous creation of Frankenstein's monster, but upon the feelings and sentiments which that creature is supposed to express as most natural—if we may use the phrase—to his unnatural condition and origin. In other words, the miracle is not wrought for the mere wonder, but is designed to give rise to a train of acting and

reasoning in itself just and probable, although the *postulatum* on which it is grounded is in the highest degree extravagant. So far *Frankenstein*, therefore, resembles the *Travels of Gulliver*, which suppose the existence of the most extravagant fictions, in order to extract from them philosophical reasoning and moral truth. In such cases the admission of the marvellous expressly resembles a sort of entry-money paid at the door of a lecture-room,—it is a concession which must be made to the author, and for which the reader is to receive value in moral instruction. But the *fantastic* of which we are now treating encumbers itself with no such conditions, and claims no farther object than to surprise the public by the wonder itself. The reader is led astray by a freakish goblin, who has neither end nor purpose in the gambols which he exhibits, and the oddity of which must constitute their own reward. The only instance we know of this species of writing in the English language, is the ludicrous sketch in Mr Geoffrey Crayon's tale of *The Bold Dragoon*, in which the furniture dances to the music of a ghostly fiddler. The other ghost-stories of this well-known and admired author come within the legitimate bounds which Glanville, and other grave and established authors, ascribe to the shadowy realms of spirits; but we suppose Mr Crayon to have exchanged his pencil in the following scene, in order to prove that the Pandours, as well as the regular forces of the ghostly world, were alike under his command:—

"By the light of the fire he saw a pale, weason-faced fellow,

in a long flannel gown, and a tall white night-cap with a tassel to it, who sat by the fire with a bellows under his arm by the way of bagpipe, from which he forced the asthmatical music that had bothered my grandfather. As he played, too, he kept twitching about with a thousand queer contortions, nodding his head, and bobbing about his tasselled night-cap.

"From the opposite side of the room, a long-backed, bandy-legged chair, covered with leather, and studded all over in a coxcombical fashion with little brass nails, got suddenly into motion, thrust out first a claw-foot, then a crooked arm, and at length making a leg, slided gracefully up to an easy chair of tarnished brocade, with a hole in its bottom, and led it gallantly out in a ghostly minuet about the floor.

"The musician now played fiercer and fiercer, and bobbed his head and his night-cap about like mad. By degrees, the dancing mania seemed to seize upon all the other pieces of furniture. The antique long-bodied chairs paired off in couples and led down a country-dance; a three-legged stool danced a hornpipe, though horribly puzzled by its supernumerary leg; while the amorous tongs seized the shovel round the waist, and whirled it about the room in a German waltz. In short, all the movables got in motion, pirouetting, hands across, right and left, like so many devils: all except a great clothes-press, which kept curtseying and curtseying in a corner like a dowager, in exquisite time to the music; being rather too corpulent to dance, or, perhaps, at a loss for a partner." [1]

This slight sketch, from the hand of a master, is all that we possess in England corresponding to the Fantastic style of composition which we are now treating of. *Peter Schlemil*, *The Devil's Elixir*, and other German works of the same character, have made it known to us through the medium of translation. The author who led the way in this department of literature was Ernest Theodore William Hoffmann; the peculiarity of whose genius, temper, and habits, fitted him to distinguish himself where imagination was to be

[1] Washington Irving's *Tales of a Traveller*, vol. i.

strained to the pitch of oddity and *bizarrerie*. He appears to have been a man of rare talent,—a poet, an artist, and a musician, but unhappily of a hypochondriac and whimsical disposition, which carried him to extremes in all his undertakings; so his music became capricious,—his drawings caricatures,—and his tales, as he himself termed them, fantastic extravagances. Bred originally to the law, he at different times enjoyed, under the Prussian and other governments, the small appointments of a subordinate magistrate; at other times he was left entirely to his own exertions, and supported himself as a musical composer for the stage, as an author, or as a draughtsman. The shifts, the uncertainty, the precarious nature of this kind of existence, had its effect, doubtless, upon a mind which nature had rendered peculiarly susceptible of elation and depression; and a temper, in itself variable, was rendered more so by frequent change of place and of occupation, as well as by the uncertainty of his affairs. He cherished his fantastic genius also with wine in considerable quantity, and indulged liberally in the use of tobacco. Even his outward appearance bespoke the state of his nervous system: a very little man with a quantity of dark-brown hair, and eyes looking through his elf-locks, that

"E'en like grey goss-hawk's stared wild,"

indicated that touch of mental derangement, of which he seems to have been himself conscious, when entering the following fearful memorandum in his diary:—

"Why, in sleeping and in waking, do I, in my thoughts, dwell upon the subject of insanity? The out-pouring of the wild ideas that arise in my mind may perhaps operate like the breathing of a vein."

Circumstances arose also in the course of Hoffmann's unsettled and wandering life, which seemed to his own apprehension to mark him as one who "was not in the roll of common men." These circumstances had not so much of the extraordinary as his fancy attributed to them. For example; he was present at deep play in a watering-place, in company with a friend, who was desirous to venture for some of the gold which lay upon the table. Betwixt hope of gain and fear of loss, distrusting at the same time his own luck, he at length thrust into Hoffmann's hand six gold pieces, and requested him to stake for him. Fortune was propitious to the young visionary, though he was totally inexperienced in the game, and he gained for his friend about thirty Fredericks d'or. The next evening Hoffmann resolved to try fortune on his own account. This purpose, he remarks, was not a previous determination, but one which was suddenly suggested by a request of his friend to undertake the charge of staking a second time on his behalf. He advanced to the table on his own account, and deposited on one of the cards the only two Fredericks d'or of which he was possessed. If Hoffmann's luck had been remarkable on the former occasion, it now seemed as if some supernatural power stood in alliance with him. Every attempt which he made succeeded—every card turned up propitiously.—

"My senses," he says, "became unmanageable, and as more and more gold streamed in upon me, it seemed as I were in a dream, out of which I only awaked to pocket the money. The play was given up, as is usual, at two in the morning. In the moment when I was about to leave the room, an old officer laid his hand upon my shoulder, and, regarding me with a fixed and severe look, said, 'Young man, if you understand this business so well, the bank, which maintains free table, is ruined; but if you do so understand the game, reckon upon it securely that the devil will be as sure of you as of all the rest of them.' Without waiting an answer, he turned away. The morning was dawning when I came home, and emptied from every pocket heaps of gold on the table. Imagine the feelings of a lad in a state of absolute dependence, and restricted to a small sum of pocket-money, who finds himself, as if by a thunder-clap, placed in possession of a sum enough to be esteemed absolute wealth, at least for the moment! But while I gazed on the treasure, my state of mind was entirely changed by a sudden and singular agony so severe, as to force the cold sweat-drops from my brow. The words of the old officer now, for the first time, rushed upon my mind in their fullest and most terrible acceptation. It seemed to me as if the gold, which glittered upon the table, was the earnest of a bargain by which the Prince of Darkness had obtained possession of my soul, which never more could escape eternal destruction. It seemed as if some poisonous reptile was sucking my heart's blood, and I felt myself fall into an abyss of despair."

Then the ruddy dawn began to gleam through the window, wood and plain were illuminated by its beams, and the visionary begun to experience the blessed feeling of returning strength, to combat with temptations, and to protect himself against the infernal propensity, which must have been attended with total destruction. Under the influence of such feelings, Hoffmann formed a vow never again to touch a card, which he kept till the end of his life. "The lesson of the officer," says Hoffmann, "was good, and its effect excellent." But the peculiar

disposition of Hoffmann made it work upon his mind more like an empiric's remedy than that of a regular physician. He renounced play less from the conviction of the wretched moral consequences of such a habit, than because he was actually afraid of the Evil Spirit in person.

In another part of his life Hoffmann had occasion to show, that his singularly wild and inflated fancy was not accessible to that degree of timidity connected with insanity, and to which poets, as being of "imagination all compact," are sometimes supposed to be peculiarly accessible. The author was in Dresden during the eventful period when the city was nearly taken by the allies, but preserved by the sudden return of Buonaparte and his guards from the frontiers of Silesia. He then saw the work of war closely carried on, venturing within fifty paces of the French sharp-shooters while skirmishing with those of the allies in front of Dresden. He had experience of a bombardment: one of the shells exploding before the house in which Hoffmann and Keller, the comedian, with bumpers in their hands to keep up their spirits, watched the progress of the attack from an upper window. The explosion killed three persons; Keller let his glass fall,—Hoffmann had more philosophy; he tossed off his bumper and moralized: "What is life!" said he, "and how frail the human frame that cannot withstand a splinter of heated iron!" He saw the field of battle when they were cramming with naked corpses the immense fosses which form the soldier's grave; the field covered with the dead

and the wounded,—with horses and men; powder-waggons which had exploded, broken weapons, schakos, sabres, cartridge-boxes, and all the relics of a desperate fight. He saw, too, Napoleon in the midst of his triumph, and heard him ejaculate to an adjutant, with the look and the deep voice of the lion, the single word "Voyons." It is much to be regretted that Hoffmann preserved but few memoranda of the eventful weeks which he spent at Dresden during this period, and of which his turn for remark and powerful description would have enabled him to give so accurate a picture. In general, it may be remarked of descriptions concerning warlike affairs, that they resemble plans rather than paintings; and that, however calculated to instruct the tactician, they are little qualified to interest the general reader. A soldier, particularly, if interrogated upon the actions which he has seen, is much more disposed to tell them in the dry and abstracted style of a gazette, than to adorn them with the remarkable and picturesque circumstances which attract the general ear. This arises from the natural feeling, that, in speaking of what they have witnessed in any other than a dry and affected professional tone, they may be suspected of a desire to exaggerate their own dangers,—a suspicion which, of all others, a brave man is most afraid of incurring, and which, besides, the present spirit of the military profession holds as amounting to bad taste. It is, therefore, peculiarly unfortunate, that when a person unconnected with the trade of war, yet well qualified to describe its terrible peculiari-

ties, chances to witness events so remarkable as those to which Dresden was exposed in the memorable 1813, he should not have made a register of what could not have failed to be deeply interesting. The battle of Leipsic, which ensued shortly after, as given to the public by an eyewitness—M. Shoberl, if we recollect the name aright—is an example of what we might have expected from a person of Hoffmann's talents, giving an account of his personal experience respecting the dreadful events which he witnessed. We could willingly have spared some of his grotesque works of *diablerie*, if we had been furnished, in their place, with the genuine description of the attack upon, and the retreat from Dresden, by the allied army, in the month of August, 1813. It was the last decisive advantage which was obtained by Napoleon, and being rapidly succeeded by the defeat of Vandamme, and the loss of his whole *corps d'armée*, was the point from which his visible declension might be correctly dated. Hoffmann was also a high-spirited patriot,—a true, honest, thoroughbred German, who had set his heart upon the liberation of his country, and would have narrated with genuine feeling the advantages which she obtained over her oppressor. It was not, however, his fortune to attempt any work, however slight, of an historical character, and the retreat of the French army soon left him to his usual habits of literary industry and convivial enjoyment.

It may, however, be supposed, that an imagination which was always upon the stretch received a

new impulse from the scenes of difficulty and danger through which our author had so lately passed. Another calamity of a domestic nature must also have tended to the increase of Hoffmann's morbid sensibility. During a journey in a public carriage, it chanced to be overturned, and the author's wife sustained a formidable injury on the head, by which she was a sufferer for a length of time.

All these circumstances, joined to the natural nervousness of his own temper, tended to throw Hoffmann into a state of mind very favourable, perhaps, to the attainment of success in his own peculiar mode of composition, but far from being such as could consist with that right and well-balanced state of human existence, in which philosophers have been disposed to rest the attainment of the highest possible degree of human happiness. Nerves which are accessible to that morbid degree of acuteness, by which the mind is incited, not only without the consent of our reason, but even contrary to its dictates, fall under the condition deprecated in the beautiful Ode to Indifference:

> "Nor peace, nor joy, the heart can know,
> Which, like the needle, true,
> Turns at the touch of joy or wo,
> But, turning, trembles too."

The pain which in one case is inflicted by an undue degree of bodily sensitiveness, is in the other the consequence of our own excited imagination; nor is it easy to determine in which the penalty of too much acuteness or vividness of perception is most severely exacted. The nerves of Hoffmann in

particular, were strung to the most painful pitch which can be supposed. A severe nervous fever, about the year 1807, had greatly increased the fatal sensibility under which he laboured, which acting primarily on the body, speedily affected the mind. He had himself noted a sort of graduated scale concerning the state of his imagination, which, like that of a thermometer, indicated the exaltation of his feelings up to a state not far distant, probably, from that of actual mental derangement. It is not, perhaps, easy to find expressions corresponding in English to the peculiar words under which Hoffmann classified his perceptions: but we may observe that he records, as the humour of one day, a deep disposition towards the romantic and religious; of a second, the perception of the exalted or excited humorous; of a third, that of the satirical humorous; of a fourth, that of the excited or extravagant musical sense; of a fifth, a romantic mood turned towards the unpleasing and the horrible; on a sixth, bitter satirical propensities excited to the most romantic, capricious, and exotic degree; of a seventh, a state of quietism of mind open to receive the most beautiful, chaste, pleasing, and imaginative impressions of a poetical character; of an eighth, a mood equally excited, but accessible only to ideas the most unpleasing, the most horrible, the most unrestrained at once and most tormenting. At other times, the feelings which are registered by this unfortunate man of genius, are of a tendency exactly the opposite to those which he marks as characteristic of his state of nervous excitement.

They indicate a depression of spirits, a mental callousness to those sensations to which the mind is at other times most alive, accompanied with that melancholy and helpless feeling which always attends the condition of one who recollects former enjoyments in which he is no longer capable of taking pleasure. This species of moral palsy is, we believe, a disease which more or less affects every one, from the poor mechanic who finds that his *hand*, as he expresses it, *is out*, that he cannot discharge his usual task with his usual alacrity, to the poet whose muse deserts him when perhaps he most desires her assistance. In such cases wise men have recourse to exercise or change of study; the ignorant and infatuated seek grosser means of diverting the paroxysm. But that which is to the person whose mind is in a healthy state, but a transitory though disagreeable feeling, becomes an actual disease in such minds as that of Hoffmann, which are doomed to experience, in too vivid perceptions in alternate excess, but far most often and longest in that which is painful—the influence of an over excited fancy. (It is minds so conformed to which Burton applies his abstract of Melancholy, giving alternately the joys and the pains which arise from the influence of the imagination.) The verses are so much to the present purpose, that we cannot better describe this changeful and hypochondriac system of mind than by inserting them:

> "When to myself I act and smile,
> With pleasing thoughts the time beguile,
> By a brook-side or wood so green,
> Unheard, unsought for, and unseen,

A thousand pleasures do me bless,
And crown my soul with happiness;
All my joys besides are folly,
None so sweet as Melancholy.
"When I lye, sit, or walk alone,
I sigh, I grieve, making great moan,
In a dark grove, or irksome den,
With discontents and furies; then
A thousand miseries at once
Mine heavy heart and soul ensconce;
All my griefs to this are jolly,
None so sour as Melancholy.
"Methinks I hear, methinks I see,
Sweet music, wonderous melody,
Towns, palaces, and cities fine;
Here now, then, then, the world is mine,
Rare beauties, gallant ladies shine,
Whate'er is lovely or divine;
All other joys to this are folly,
None so sweet as Melancholy.
"Methinks I hear, methinks I see
Ghosts, goblins, fiends; my phantasie
Presents a thousand ugly shapes,
Headless bears, black men and apes,
Doleful outcries and fearful sights
My sad and dismal soul affrights;
All my griefs to this are jolly,
None so damn'd as Melancholy."

In the transcendental state of excitation described in these verses, the painful and gloomy mood of the mind is, generally speaking, of much more common occurrence than that which is genial, pleasing, or delightful. Every one who chooses attentively to consider the workings of his own bosom, may easily ascertain the truth of this assertion, which indeed appears a necessary accompaniment of the imperfect state of humanity, which usually presents to us, in regard to anticipation of the future, so

much more that is unpleasing than is desirable; in other words, where fear has a far less limited reign than the opposite feeling of hope. It was Hoffmann's misfortune to be peculiarly sensible of the former passion, and almost instantly to combine with any pleasing sensation, as it arose, the idea of mischievous or dangerous consequences. His biographer has given a singular example of this unhappy disposition, not only to apprehend the worst when there was real ground for expecting evil, but also to mingle such apprehension capriciously and unseasonably, with incidents which were in themselves harmless and agreeable. "The devil," he was wont to say, "will put his hoof into every thing, how good soever in the outset." A trifling but whimsical instance will best ascertain the nature of this unhappy propensity to expect the worst. Hoffmann, a close observer of nature, chanced one day to see a little girl apply to a market-woman's stall to purchase some fruit which had caught her eye and excited her desire. The wary trader wished first to know what she was able to expend on the purchase; and when the poor girl, a beautiful creature, produced with exultation and pride a very small piece of money, the market-woman gave her to understand that there was nothing upon her stall which fell within the compass of her customer's purse. The poor little maiden, mortified and affronted, as well as disappointed, was retiring with tears in her eyes, when Hoffmann called her back, and arranging matters with the dealer, filled the child's lap with the most beautiful fruit. Yet

he had hardly time to enjoy the idea that he had altered the whole expression of the juvenile countenance from mortification to extreme delight and happiness, than he became tortured with the idea that he might be the cause of the child's death, since the fruit he had bestowed upon it might occasion a surfeit or some other fatal disease. This presentiment haunted him until he reached the house of a friend, and it was akin to many which persecuted him during life, never leaving him to enjoy the satisfaction of a kind or benevolent action, and poisoning with the vague prospect of imaginary evil whatever was in its immediate tendency productive of present pleasure or promising future happiness.

We cannot here avoid contrasting the character of Hoffmann with that of the highly imaginative poet Wordsworth, many of whose smaller poems turn upon a sensibility affected by such small incidents as that above mentioned, with this remarkable difference—that the virtuous, and manly, and well-regulated disposition of the author leads him to derive pleasing, tender, and consoling reflections from those circumstances which induced Hoffmann to anticipate consequences of a different character. Such petty incidents are passed noteless over by men of ordinary minds. Observers of poetical imagination, like Wordsworth and Hoffmann, are the chemists who can distil them into cordials or poisons.

We do not mean to say that the imagination of Hoffmann was either wicked or corrupt, but only

that it was ill-regulated, and had an undue tendency to the horrible and the distressing. Thus he was followed, especially in his hours of solitude and study, by the apprehension of mysterious danger to which he conceived himself exposed; and the whole tribe of demi-gorgons, apparitions, and fanciful spectres and goblins of all kinds with which he has filled his pages, although in fact the children of his own imagination, were no less discomposing to him than if they had had a real existence and actual influence upon him. The visions which his fancy excited are stated often to be so lively, that he was unable to endure them; and in the night, which was often his time of study, he was accustomed frequently to call his wife up from bed, that she might sit by him while he was writing, and protect him by her presence from the phantoms conjured up by his own excited imagination.

Thus was the inventor, or at least first distinguished artist who exhibited the fantastic or supernatural grotesque in his compositions, so nearly on the verge of actual insanity, as to be afraid of the beings his own fancy created. It is no wonder that to a mind so vividly accessible to the influence of the imagination, so little under the dominion of sober reason, such a numerous train of ideas should occur in which fancy had a large share and reason none at all. In fact, the grotesque in his compositions partly resembles the arabesque in painting, in which is introduced the most strange and complicated monsters, resembling centaurs, griffins, sphinxes, chimeras, rocs, and all other creatures of

romantic imagination, dazzling the beholder as it were by the unbounded fertility of the author's imagination, and sating it by the rich contrast of all the varieties of shape and colouring, while there is in reality nothing to satisfy the understanding or inform the judgment. Hoffmann spent his life, which could not be a happy one, in weaving webs of this wild and imaginative character, for which after all he obtained much less credit with the public, than his talents must have gained if exercised under the restraint of a better taste or a more solid judgment. There is much reason to think that his life was shortened not only by his mental malady, of which it is the appropriate quality to impede digestion and destroy the healthful exercise of the powers of the stomach, but also by the indulgences to which he had recourse in order to secure himself against the melancholy, which operated so deeply upon the constitution of his mind. This was the more to be regretted, as, notwithstanding the dreams of an overheated imagination, by which his taste appears to have been so strangely misled, Hoffmann seems to have been a man of excellent disposition, a close observer of nature, and one who, if this sickly and disturbed train of thought had not led him to confound the supernatural with the absurd, would have distinguished himself as a painter of human nature, of which in its realities he was an observer and an admirer.

Hoffmann was particularly skilful in depicting characters arising in his own country of Germany. Nor is there any of her numerous authors who have

better and more faithfully designed the upright honesty and firm integrity which is to be met with in all classes which come from the ancient Teutonic stock. There is one character in particular in the tale called "*Der Majorat*" — *the Entail*—which is perhaps peculiar to Germany, and which makes a magnificent contrast to the same class of persons as described in romances, and as existing perhaps in real life in other countries. The justiciary B—— bears about the same office in the family of the Baron Roderick von R——, a nobleman possessed of vast estates in Courland, which the generally-known Bailie Macwheeble occupied on the land of the Baron of Bradwardine. The justiciary, for example, was the representative of the seigneur in his feudal courts of justice; he superintended his revenues, regulated and controlled his household, and from his long acquaintance with the affairs of the family, was entitled to interfere both with advice and assistance in any case of peculiar necessity. In such a character, the Scottish author has permitted himself to introduce a strain of the roguery supposed to be incidental to the inferior classes of the law,—maybe no unnatural ingredient. The bailie is mean, sordid, a trickster, and a coward, redeemed only from our dislike and contempt by the ludicrous qualities of his character, by a considerable degree of shrewdness, and by the species of almost instinctive attachment to his master and his family, which seem to overbalance in quality the natural selfishness of his disposition. The justiciary of R—— is the very reverse

of this character. He is indeed an original: having the peculiarities of age and some of its satirical peevishness; but in his moral qualities he is well described by La Motte Fouqué, as a hero of ancient days in the night-gown and slippers of an old lawyer of the present age. The innate worth, independence, and resolute courage of the justiciary seem to be rather enhanced than diminished by his education and profession, which naturally infers an accurate knowledge of mankind, and which, if practised without honour and honesty, is the basest and most dangerous fraud which an individual can put upon the public. Perhaps a few lines of Crabbe may describe the general tendency of the justiciary's mind, although marked, as we shall show, by loftier traits of character than those which the English poet has assigned to the worthy attorney of his borough :—

> "He, roughly honest, has been long a guide
> In borough business on the conquering side;
> And seen so much of both sides and so long,
> He thinks the bias of man's mind goes wrong:
> Thus, though he's friendly, he is still severe,
> Surly, though kind, suspiciously sincere:
> So much he's seen of baseness in the mind,
> That while a friend to man, he scorns mankind;
> He knows the human heart, and sees with dread
> By slight temptation how the strong are led;
> He knows how interest can asunder rend
> The bond of parent, master, guardian, friend,
> To form a new and a degrading tie
> 'Twixt needy vice and tempting villany."

The justiciary of Hoffmann, however, is of a higher character than the person distinguished by Crabbe. Having known two generations of the

baronial house to which he is attached, he has become possessed of their family secrets, some of which are of a mysterious and terrible nature. This confidential situation, but much more the nobleness and energy of his own character, gives the old man a species of authority even over his patron himself, although the baron is a person of stately manners, and occasionally manifests a fierce and haughty temper. It would detain us too long to communicate a sketch of the story, though it is, in our opinion, the most interesting contained in the reveries of the author. Something, however, we must say to render intelligible the brief extracts which it is our purpose to make, chiefly to illustrate the character of the justiciary.

The principal part of the estate of the baron consisted in the Castle of R——sitten, a majorat, or entailed property, which gives name to the story, and which, as being such, the baron was under the necessity of making his place of residence for a certain number of weeks in every year, although it had nothing inviting in its aspect or inhabitants. It was a huge old pile, overhanging the Baltic sea, silent, dismal, almost uninhabited, and surrounded, instead of gardens and pleasure-grounds, by forests of black pines and firs, which came up to its very walls. The principal amusement of the baron and his guests was to hunt the wolves and bears which tenanted these woods during the day, and to conclude the evening with a boisterous sort of festivity, in which the efforts made at passionate mirth and hilarity showed that, on the baron's side at

least, they did not actually exist. Part of the castle was in ruins; a tower built for the purpose of astrology by one of its old possessors, the founder of the majorat in question, had fallen down, and by its fall made a deep chasm, which extended from the highest turret down to the dungeon of the castle. The fall of the tower had proved fatal to the unfortunate astrologer; the abyss which it occasioned was no less so to his eldest son. There was a mystery about the fate of the last, and all the facts known or conjectured respecting the cause of his fatal end were the following.

The baron had been persuaded by some expressions of an old steward, that treasures belonging to the deceased astrologer lay buried in the gulf which the tower had created by its fall. The entrance to this horrible abyss lay from the knightly hall of the castle, and the door, which still remained there, had once given access to the stair of the tower, but since its fall only opened on a yawning gulf full of stones. At the bottom of this gulf the second baron, of whom we speak, was found crushed to death, holding a wax-light fast in his hand. It was imagined he had risen to seek a book from a library which also opened from the hall, and, mistaking the one door for the other, had met his fate by falling into the yawning gulf. Of this, however, there could be no certainty.

This double accident, and the natural melancholy attached to the place, occasioned the present Baron Roderick residing so little there; but the title under which he held the estate laid him under

the necessity of making it his residence for a few weeks every year. About the same time when he took up his abode there, the justiciary was accustomed to go thither for the purpose of holding baronial courts, and transacting his other official business. When the tale opens he sets out upon his journey to R——sitten, accompanied by a nephew, the narrator of the tale, a young man, entirely new to the world, trained somewhat in the school of Werter,—romantic, enthusiastic, with some disposition to vanity,—a musician, a poet, and a coxcomb; upon the whole, however, a very well-disposed lad, with great respect for his grand-uncle, the justiciary, by whom he is regarded with kindness, but also as a subject of raillery. The old man carries him along with him, partly to assist in his professional task, partly that he might get somewhat case-hardened by feeling the cold wind of the north whistle about his ears, and undergoing the fatigue and dangers of a wolf-hunt.

They reach the old castle in the midst of a snow storm, which added to the dismal character of the place, and which lay piled thick up against the very gate by which they should enter. All knocking of the postilion was in vain; and here we shall let Hoffmann tell his own story.

"The old man then raised his powerful voice: 'Francis! Francis! where are you then? be moving; we freeze here at the door: the snow is peeling our faces raw; be stirring;—the devil!' A watch-dog at length began to bark, and a wandering light was seen in the lower story of the building,—keys rattled, and at length the heavy folding-doors opened with difficulty. 'A fair welcome t'ye in this foul weather!' said old Francis,

holding the lantern so high as to throw the whole light upon his shrivelled countenance, the features of which were twisted into a smile of welcome; the carriage drove into the court, we left it, and I was then for the first time aware that the ancient domestic was dressed in an old-fashioned, läger-livery, adorned with various loops and braids of lace. Only one pair of grey locks now remained upon his broad white forehead; the lower part of his face retained the colouring proper to the hardy huntsman; and, in spite of the crumpled muscles which writhed the countenance into something resembling a fantastic mask, there was an air of stupid yet honest kindness and good-humour, which glanced from his eyes, played around his mouth, and reconciled you to his physiognomy.

"'Well, old Frank!' said my great uncle, as, entering the antechamber, he shook the snow from his pelisse, 'well, old man, is all ready in my apartments? Have the carpets been brushed,—the beds properly arranged,—and good fires kept in my room yesterday and to-day?'—'No!' answered Frank with great composure, 'no, worthy sir! not a bit of all that has been done.'—'Good God!' said my uncle, 'did not I write in good time,—and do I not come at the exact day? Was ever such a piece of stupidity? And now I must sleep in rooms as cold as ice!'—'Indeed, worthy Mr Justiciary,' said Francis with great solemnity, while he removed carefully with the snuffers a glowing waster from the candle, flung it on the floor, and trod cautiously upon it, 'you must know that the airing would have been to no purpose, for the wind and snow have driven in, in such quantities through the broken window-frames: so——'—'What!' said my uncle, interrupting him, throwing open his pelisse, and placing both arms on his sides, 'what! the windows are broken, and you, who have charge of the castle, have not had them repaired?'—'That would have been done, worthy sir,' answered Francis with the same indifference,' but people could not get rightly at them on account of the heaps of rubbish and stone that are lying in the apartment.'—'And how, in a thousand devils' names,' said my great uncle, 'came rubbish and stones into my chamber?'—'God bless you, my young master,' said the old man, episodically to me, who happened at the moment to sneeze, then proceeded gravely to answer the justiciary, that the stones and rubbish were those of a partition-wall which had fallen in the last great tempest. 'What, the devil! have you had an earthquake?' said my uncle, angrily. 'No, worthy sir,' replied the

old man, 'but three days ago the heavy paved roof of the justice-hall fell in with a tremendous crash.' 'May the devil——' said my uncle, breaking out in a passion, and about to let fly a heavy oath; but suddenly checking himself, he lifted submissively his right hand towards heaven, while he moved with his left his fur cap from his forehead, was silent for an instant, then turned to me and spoke cheerfully: 'In good truth, kinsman, we had better hold our tongues and ask no further questions, else we shall only learn greater mishaps, or perhaps the whole castle may come down upon our heads. But, Frank,' said he, 'how could you be so stupid as not to get another apartment arranged and aired for me and this youth? Why did you not put some large room in the upper-story of the castle in order for the court-day?'—'That is already done,' said the old man, pointing kindly to the stairs, and beginning to ascend with the light. 'Now, only think of the old houlet, that could not say this at once,' said my uncle, while we followed the domestic. We passed through many long, high, vaulted corridors,—the flickering light carried by Francis throwing irregular gleams on the thick darkness; pillars, capitals, and arches of various shapes appeared to totter as we passed them; our own shadows followed us with giant steps, and the singular pictures on the wall, across which these shadows passed, seemed to waver and to tremble, and their voices to whisper amongst the heavy echoes of our footsteps, saying—'Wake us not, wake us not, the enchanted inhabitants of this ancient fabric!' At length, after we had passed along the range of cold and dark apartments, Francis opened a saloon in which a large blazing fire received us with a merry crackling, resembling a hospitable welcome. I felt myself cheered on the instant I entered the apartment; but my great uncle remained standing in the middle of the hall, looked round him, and spoke with a very serious and almost solemn tone: 'This, then, must be our hall of justice!' Francis raising the light so that it fell upon an oblong whitish patch of the large dark wall, which patch had exactly the size and form of a walled-up or condemned door, said in a low and sorrowful tone, 'Justice has been executed here before now.'—'How came you to say that, old man?' said my uncle, hastily throwing the pelisse from his shoulders.—'The word escaped me,' said Francis, as he lighted the candles on the table, and opened the door of a neighbouring apartment where two beds were comfortably prepared for the reception of the guests. In a short time a good supper smoked before us in the

hall, to which succeeded a bowl of punch, mixed according to the right northern fashion, and it may therefore be presumed none of the weakest, Tired with his journey, my uncle betook himself to bed; but the novelty and strangeness of the situation, and even the excitement of the liquor I had drank, prevented me from thinking of sleep. The old domestic removed the supper-table, made up the fire in the chimney, and took leave of me after his manner with many a courteous bow.

"And now I was left alone in the wide high hall of chivalry; the hail-storm had ceased to patter, and the wind to howl; the sky was become clear without-doors, and the full moon streamed through the broad transome windows, illumining, as if by magic, all those dark corners of the singular apartment into which the imperfect light of the wax candles and the chimney-fire could not penetrate. As frequently happens in old castles, the walls and roof of the apartment were ornamented—the former with heavy pannelling, the latter with fantastic carving, gilded and painted of different colours. The subjects chiefly presented the desperate hunting matches with bears and wolves, and the heads of the animals, being in many cases carved, projected strangely from the painted bodies, and even, betwixt the fluttering and uncertain light of the moon and of the fire, gave a grisly degree of reality. Amidst these pieces were hung portraits, as large as life, of knights striding forth in hunting-dresses, probably the chase-loving ancestors of the present baron. Every thing, whether of painting or of carving, showed the dark and decayed colours of times long passed, and rendered more conspicuous the blank and light-coloured part of the wall before noticed. It was in the middle space betwixt two doors which led off through the hall into side-apartments, and I could now see that it must itself have been a door, built up at a later period, but not made to correspond with the rest of the apartment, either by being painted over or covered with carved work. Who knows not that an unwonted and somewhat extraordinary situation possesses a mysterious power over the human spirit? Even the dullest fancy will awake in a secluded valley surrounded with rocks, or within the walls of a gloomy church, and will be taught to expect, in such a situation, things different from those encountered in the ordinary course of human life. Conceive too that I was only a lad of twenty years of age, and that I had drunk several glasses of strong liquor, and it may easily be believed that the knight's hall in which I sat made a singular impression on my spirit. The

stillness of the night is also to be remembered—broken, as it was, only by the heavy waving of the billows of the sea, and the solemn piping of the wind, resembling the tones of a mighty organ touched by some passing spirit; the clouds wandering across the moon, drifted along the arched windows, and seemed giant shapes gazing through the rattling casements; in short, in the slight shuddering which crept over me, I felt as if an unknown world was about to expand itself visibly before me. This feeling, however silly, only resembled the slight and not unpleasing shudder with which we read or hear a well-told ghost story. It occurred to me in consequence that I could find no more favourable opportunity for reading the work to which, like most young men of a romantic bias, I was peculiarly partial, and which I happened to have in my pocket. It was 'the Ghost Seer' of Schiller: I read—and read, and in doing so excited my fancy more and more, until I came to that part of the tale which seizes on the imagination with so much fervour, viz. the wedding feast in the house of the Count von B——. Just at the very moment when I arrived at the passage where the bloody spectre of Gironimo entered the wedding apartment, the door of the knight's hall, which led into an antechamber, burst open with a violent shock;—I started up with astonishment, and the book dropped from my hand; but, as in the same moment all was again still, I became ashamed of my childish terror;—it might be by the impulse of the rushing night-wind, or by some other natural cause that the door was flung open. 'It is nothing,' I said aloud, 'my overheated fancy turns the most natural accidents into the supernatural.' Having thus re-assured myself, I picked up the book and again sat down in the elbow-chair; but then I heard something move in the apartment with measured steps, sighing at the same time, and sobbing in a manner which seemed to express at once the extremity of inconsolable sorrow, and the most agonizing pain which the human bosom could feel. I tried to believe that this could only be the moans of some animal enclosed somewhere near our part of the house, I reflected upon the mysterious power of the night, which makes distant sounds appear as if they were close beside us, and I expostulated with myself for suffering the sounds to affect me with terror. But as I thus debated the point, a sound like that of scratching mixed with louder and deeper sighs, such as could only be extracted by the most acute mental agony, or during the parting pang of life, was indisputably heard upon the very spot where the door appeared to have been

built up: 'Yet it *can* only be some poor animal in confinement —I shall call out aloud, or I shall stamp with my foot upon the ground, and then either every thing will be silent, or the animal will make itself be known;' so I purposed. but the blood stopped in my veins—a cold sweat stood upon my forehead—I remained fixed in my chair, not daring to rise, far less to call out. The hateful sounds at last ceased—the steps were again distinguished —it seemed as if life and the power of motion returned to me—I started up and walked two paces forward, but in that moment an ice-cold night breeze whistled through the hall, and at the same time the moon threw a bright light upon the picture of a very grave, wellnigh terrible looking man, and it seemed to me as if I plainly heard a warning voice amid the deep roar of the sea and the shriller whistle of the night-wind speaking the warning,—'No farther! No farther! Lest thou encounter the terrors of the spiritual world!' The door now shut with the same violent clash with which it had burst open: I heard the sound of steps retiring along the anteroom and descending the staircase: the principal door of the castle was opened and shut with violence; then it seemed as if a horse was led out of the stable, and, after a short time, as if it was again conducted back to its stall. After this, all was still, at the same time I became aware that my uncle in the neighbouring apartment was struggling in his sleep and groaned like a man afflicted with a heavy dream. I hastened to awake him, and when I had succeeded, I received his thanks for the service. 'Thou hast done well, kinsman, to awake me,' he said; 'I have had a detestable dream, the cause of which is this apartment and the hall, which set me a thinking upon past times and upon many extraordinary events which have here happened. But now we shall sleep sound till morning.'"

With morning the business of the justiciary's office began. But, abridging the young lawyer's prolonged account of what took place, the mystic terror of the preceding evening retained so much effect on his imagination, that he was disposed to find out traces of the supernatural in every thing which met his eyes; even two respectable old ladies, aunts of Baron Roderick von R———, and the sole old fashioned inhabitants of the old fashion-

ed castle, had in their French caps and furbelows a ghostly and phantom-like appearance in his prejudiced eyes. The justiciary becomes disturbed by the strange behaviour of his assistant; he enters into expostulation upon the subject so soon as they were in private:

"'What is the matter with you?' he said; 'thou speakest not; thou eatest not; thou drinkest not;—art thou sick; or dost thou lack any thing? in short, what a fiend ails thee?' I embraced the opportunity to communicate all the horrible scenes of the preceding night; not even concealing from my grand uncle that I had drunk a good deal of punch, and had been reading 'the Ghost Seer' of Schiller. 'This, I must allow,' I added, 'because it is possible, that my toiling and overheated fancy might have created circumstances which had no other existence.' I now expected that my kinsman would read me a sharp lecture on my folly, or treat me with some bitter jibes; but he did neither; he became very grave, looked long on the ground, then suddenly fixed a bold and glowing look upon me. 'Kinsman,' said he, 'I am unacquainted with your book; but you have neither it nor the liquor to thank for the ghostly exhibition you have described. Know, that I had a dream to the self-same purpose. I thought I sat in the hall as thou didst; but whereas *thou* only heardest sounds, *I* beheld, with the eyes of my spirit, the appearances which these voices announced. Yes! I beheld the inhuman monster as he entered,—saw him glide to the condemned door,—saw him scratch on the wall in comfortless despair until the blood burst from under his wounded nails; then I beheld him lead a horse from the stable, and again conduct it back;—didst thou not hear the cock crow in the distant village? it was then that thou didst awake me, and I soon got the better of the terrors by which this departed sinner is permitted to disturb the peace of human life.' The old man stopped, and I dared not ask further questions, well knowing he would explain the whole to me when it was proper to do so. After a space, during which he appeared wrapt in thought, my uncle proceeded: 'Kinsman, now that thou knowest the nature of this disturbance, hast thou the courage once more to encounter it, having me in thy company?' It was natural that I should answer in the affirmative,

the rather as I found myself mentally strengthened to the task: 'Then will we,' proceeded the old man, 'watch together this ensuing night. There is an inward voice which tells me this wicked spirit must give way, not so much to the force of my understanding, as to my courage, which is built upon a firm confidence in God. I feel, too, that it is no rash or criminal undertaking, but a bold and pious duty that I am about to discharge. When I risk body and life to banish the evil spirit who would drive the sons from the ancient inheritance of their fathers, it is in no spirit of presumption or vain curiosity: since, in the firm integrity of mind, and the pious confidence which lives within me, the most ordinary man is and remains a victorious hero. But should it be God's will that the wicked spirit shall have power over me, then shalt thou, kinsman, make it known that I died in honourable Christian combat with the hellish spectre which haunts this place. For thee, thou must keep thyself at a distance, and no ill will befall thee.'

"The evening was spent in various kinds of employment; the supper was set as before in the knights' hall; the full moon shone clear through the glimmering clouds; the billows of the sea roared; and the night-wind shook the rattling casements. However inwardly excited, we compelled ourselves to maintain an indifferent conversation. The old man had laid his repeating watch on the table; it struck twelve; then the door flew open with a heavy crash, and, as on the former night, slow and light footsteps traversed the hall, and the sighs and groans were heard as before. My uncle was pale as death; but his eyes streamed with unwonted fire, and as he stood upright, his left arm dropped by his side and his right uplifted toward heaven, he had the air of a hero in the act of devotion. The sighs and groans became louder and more distinguishable, and the hateful sounds of scratching upon the wall were again heard more odiously than on the former night. The old man then strode right forward towards the condemned door, with a step so bold and firm that the hall echoed back his tread. He stopped close before the spot where the ghostly sounds were heard yet more and more wildly, and spoke with a strong and solemn tone such as I never heard him before use: 'Daniel! Daniel!' he said, 'what makest thou here at this hour?' A dismal screech was the reply, and a sullen heavy sound was heard, as when a weighty burden is cast down upon the floor. 'Seek grace and mercy before the throne of the Highest!' continued my uncle, with a voice even more

authoritative than before, there is thy only place of appeal! Hence with thee out of the living world in which thou hast no longer a portion!' It seemed as if a low wailing was heard to glide through the sky and to die away in the roaring of the storm which began now to awaken. Then the old man stepped to the door of the hall and closed it with such vehemence that the whole place echoed. In his speech, in his gestures, there seemed something almost superhuman which filled me with a species of holy fear. As he placed himself in the arm-chair, the fixed sternness of his rigid brow began to relax; his look appeared more clear; he folded his hands, and prayed internally. Some minutes passed away ere he said, with that mild tone which penetrates so deeply into the heart, the simple words, 'now kinsman?' Overcome by horror, anxiety, holy reverence and love, I threw myself on my knees, and moistened with warm tears the hand which he stretched out to me; the old man folded me in his arms, and, after he had pressed me to his bosom with heartfelt affection, said, with a feeble and exhausted voice, 'now, kinsman, shall we sleep soft and undisturbed!'"

The spirit returned no more. It was the ghost —as may have been anticipated—of a false domestic, by whose hand the former baron had been precipitated into the gulf which yawned behind the new wall so often mentioned in the narrative.

The other adventures in the castle of R——sitten are of a different cast, but strongly mark the power of delineating human character which Hoffmann possessed. Baron Roderick and his lady arrive at the castle with a train of guests. The lady is young, beautiful, nervous, and full of sensibility,—fond of soft music, pathetic poetry, and walks by moonlight; the rude company of huntsmen by which the baron is surrounded, their boisterous sports in the morning, and their no less boisterous mirth in the evening, is wholly foreign to the disposition of the Baroness Seraphina, who is led to seek relief

in the society of the nephew of the justiciary, who can make sonnets, repair harpsichords, sustain a part in an Italian duet, or in a sentimental conversation. In short, the two young persons, without positively designing any thing wrong, are in a fair way of rendering themselves guilty and miserable, were they not saved from the snare which their passion was preparing, by the calm observation, strong sense, and satirical hints of our friend the justiciary.

It may therefore be said of this personage, that he possesses that true and honourable character which we may conceive entitling a mortal as well to overcome the malevolent attacks of evil beings from the other world as to stop and control the course of moral evil in that we inhabit, and the sentiment is of the highest order by which Hoffmann ascribes to unsullied masculine honour and integrity that same indemnity from the power of evil which the poet claims for female purity:

> "Some say no evil thing that walks by night
> In fog, or fire, by lake or moorish fen,
> Blue meagre hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost
> That breaks his magic chain at curfew time,
> No goblin, nor swart faery of the mine,
> Hath hurtful power o'er true virginity."

What we admire, therefore, in the extracts which we have given, is not the mere wonderful or terrible part of the story, though the circumstances are well narrated; it is the advantageous light in which it places the human character as capable of being armed with a strong sense of duty, and of opposing itself, without presumption but with confidence, to

a power of which it cannot estimate the force, of which it hath every reason to doubt the purpose, and at the idea of confronting which our nature recoils.

Before we leave the story of "The Entail," we must notice the conclusion, which is beautifully told, and will recall to most readers who are past the prime of life, feelings which they themselves must occasionally have experienced. Many, many years after the baronial race of R—— had become extinguished, accident brought the young nephew, now a man in advanced age, to the shores of the Baltic. It was night, and his eye was attracted by a strong light which spread itself along the horizon.

"'What fire is that before us, postilion?' said I. 'It is no fire,' answered he, 'it is the beacon light of R——sitten.'—'Of R——sitten!' He had scarce uttered the words, when the picture of the remarkable days which I had passed in that place arose in clear light in my memory. I saw the baron,—I saw Seraphina,—I saw the strange-looking old aunts,—I saw myself, with a fair boyish countenance, out of which the mother's milk seemed not yet to have been pressed, my frock of delicate azure blue, my hair curled and powdered with the utmost accuracy, the very image of the lover sighing like a furnace, who tunes his sonnets to his mistress's eyebrows. Amidst a feeling of deep melancholy, fluttered like sparkles of light the recollection of the justiciary's rough jests, which appeared to me now much more pleasant than when I was the subject of them. Next morning I visited the village, and made some enquiries after the baronial steward: 'With your favour, sir,' said the postilion, taking the pipe out of his mouth, and touching his night-cap, 'there is here no baronial steward; the place belongs to his Majesty, and the royal superintendent is still in bed.' On farther questions, I learned that the Baron Roderick von R—— having died without descendants, the entailed estate, according to the terms of the grant, had been vested in the crown. I walked up to the castle which lay now in a heap of ruins. An old peasant, who came out of the

pine wood, informed me that a great part of the stones had been used to build the beacon-tower; he told me, too, of the spectre which in former times had haunted the spot, and asserted that when the moon was at the full, the voice of lamentation was still heard among the ruins."

If the reader has, in a declining period of his life, revisited the scenes of youthful interest, and received from the mouth of strangers an account of the changes which have taken place, he will not be indifferent to the simplicity of this conclusion.

The passage which we have quoted, while it shows the wildness of Hoffmann's fancy, evinces also that he possessed power which ought to have mitigated and allayed it. Unfortunately, his taste and temperament directed him too strongly to the grotesque and fantastic,—carried him too far "extra mœnia flammantia mundi," too much beyond the circle not only of probability but even of possibility, to admit of his composing much in the better style which he might easily have attained. The popular romance, no doubt, has many walks, nor are we at all inclined to halloo the dogs of criticism against those whose object is merely to amuse a passing hour. It may be repeated with truth, that in this path of light literature, "tout genre est permis hors les genres ennuyeux," and of course, an error in taste ought not to be followed up and hunted down as if it were a false maxim in morality, a delusive hypothesis in science, or a heresy in religion itself. Genius too, is, we are aware, capricious, and must be allowed to take its own flights, however eccentric, were it but for the sake of experiment. Sometimes, also, it may be eminently pleasing to look at

the wildness of an Arabesque painting executed by a man of rich fancy. But we do not desire to see genius expand or rather exhaust itself upon themes which cannot be reconciled to taste; and the utmost length in which we can indulge a turn to the fantastic is, where it tends to excite agreeable and pleasing ideas.

We are not called upon to be equally tolerant of such capriccios as are not only startling by their extravagance, but disgusting by their horrible import. Moments there are, and must have been, in the author's life, of pleasing as well as painful excitation; and the Champagne which sparkled in his glass must have lost its benevolent influence if it did not sometimes wake his fancy to emotions which were pleasant as well as whimsical. But as repeatedly the tendency of all overstrained feelings is directed towards the painful, and the fits of lunacy, and the crisises of very undue excitement which approaches to it, are much more frequently of a disagreeable than of a pleasant character, it is too certain, that we possess in a much greater degree the power of exciting in our minds what is fearful, melancholy, or horrible, than of commanding thoughts of a lively and pleasing character. The grotesque, also, has a natural alliance with the horrible; for that which is out of nature can be with difficulty reconciled to the beautiful. Nothing, for instance, could be more displeasing to the eye than the palace of that crack-brained Italian prince, which was decorated with every species of monstrous sculptures which a depraved imagination

could suggest to the artist. The works of Callot, though evincing a wonderful fertility of mind, are in like manner regarded with surprise rather than pleasure. If we compare his fertility with that of Hogarth, they resemble each other in extent; but in that of the satisfaction afforded by a close examination the English artist has wonderfully the advantage. Every new touch which the observer detects amid the rich superfluities of Hogarth is an article in the history of human manners, if not of the human heart; while, on the contrary, in examining microscopically the diablerie of Callot's pieces, we only discover fresh instances of ingenuity thrown away, and of fancy pushed into the regions of absurdity. The works of the one painter resemble a garden carefully cultivated, each nook of which contains something agreeable or useful; while those of the other are like the garden of the sluggard, where a soil equally fertile produces nothing but wild and fantastic weeds.

Hoffmann has in some measure identified himself with the ingenious artist upon whom we have just passed a censure by his title of "Night Pieces *after the manner of Callot*," and in order to write such a tale, for example, as that called "The Sandman," he must have been deep in the mysteries of that fanciful artist, with whom he might certainly boast a kindred spirit. We have given an instance of a tale in which the wonderful is, in our opinion, happily introduced, because it is connected with and applied to human interest and human feeling, and illustrates with no ordinary force the elevation to

which circumstances may raise the power and dignity of the human mind. The following narrative is of a different class :

> " half horror and half whim,
> Like fiends in glee, ridiculously grim."

Nathaniel, the hero of the story, acquaints us with the circumstances of his life in a letter addressed to Lothiar, the brother of Clara ; the one being his friend, the other his betrothed bride. The writer is a young man of a fanciful and hypochondriac temperament, poetical and metaphysical in an excessive degree, with precisely that state of nerves which is most accessible to the influence of imagination. He communicates to his friend and his mistress an adventure of his childhood. It was, it seems, the custom of his father, an honest watchmaker, to send his family to bed upon certain days earlier in the evening than usual, and the mother in enforcing this observance used to say, " To-bed, children, *the Sandman* is coming !" In fact, on such occasions, Nathaniel observed that after their hour of retiring, a knock was heard at the door, a heavy step echoed on the staircase, some person entered his father's apartments, and occasionally a disagreeable and suffocating vapour was perceptible through the house. This then was the Sandman ; but what was his occupation and what was his purpose ? The nursery-maid being applied to, gave a nursery-maid's explanation, that the Sandman was a bad man, who flung sand in the eyes of little children who did not go to bed. This increased the terror of the boy,

but at the same time raised his curiosity. He determined to conceal himself in his father's apartment and wait the arrival of the nocturnal visitor; he did so, and the Sandman proved to be no other than the lawyer Copelius, whom he had often seen in his father's company. He was a huge left-handed, splay-footed sort of personage, with a large nose, great ears, exaggerated features, and a sort of ogre-like aspect, which had often struck terror into the children before this ungainly limb of the law was identified with the terrible Sandman. Hoffmann has given a pencil sketch of this uncouth figure, in which he has certainly contrived to represent something as revolting to adults as it might be terrible to children. He was received by the father with a sort of humble observance; a secret stove was opened and lighted, and they instantly commenced chemical operations of a strange and mysterious description, but which immediately accounted for that species of vapour which had been perceptible on other occasions. The gestures of the chemists grew fantastic, their faces, even that of the father, seemed to become wild and terrific as they prosecuted their labours; the boy became terrified, screamed, and left his hiding-place;—was detected by the alchymist, for such Copelius was, who threatened to pull out his eyes, and was with some difficulty prevented by the father's interference from putting hot ashes in the child's face. Nathaniel's imagination was deeply impressed by the terror he had undergone, and a nervous fever was the consequence, during which the horrible figure

of the disciple of Paracelsus was the spectre which tormented his imagination.

After a long interval, and when Nathaniel was recovered, the nightly visits of Copelius to his pupil were renewed, but the latter promised his wife that it should be for the last time. It proved so, but not in the manner which the old watchmaker meant. An explosion took place in the chemical laboratory which cost Nathaniel's father his life; his instructor in the fatal art, to which he had fallen a victim, was no where to be seen. It followed from these incidents, calculated to make so strong an impression upon a lively imagination, that Nathaniel was haunted through life by the recollections of this horrible personage, and Copelius became in his mind identified with the evil principle.

When introduced to the reader, the young man is studying at the university, where he is suddenly surprised by the appearance of his old enemy, who now personates an Italian or Tyrolese pedlar, dealing in optical glasses and such trinkets, and, although dressed according to his new profession, continuing under the Italianized name of Giuseppe Coppola to be identified with the ancient adversary. Nathaniel is greatly distressed at finding himself unable to persuade either his friend or his mistress of the justice of the horrible apprehensions which he conceives ought to be entertained from the supposed identity of this terrible jurisconsult with his double-ganger the dealer in barometers. He is also displeased with Clara, because her clear and sound good sense rejects not only his metaphysical

terrors, but also his inflated and affected strain of poetry. His mind gradually becomes alienated from the frank, sensible, and affectionate companion of his childhood, and he grows in the same proportion attached to the daughter of a professor called Spalanzani, whose house is opposite to the windows of his lodging. He has thus an opportunity of frequently remarking Olympia as she sits in her apartment; and although she remains there for hours without reading, working, or even stirring, he yet becomes enamoured of her extreme beauty in despite of the insipidity of so inactive a person. But much more rapidly does this fatal passion proceed when he is induced to purchase a perspective glass from the pedlar, whose resemblance was so perfect to his old object of detestation. Deceived by the secret influence of the medium of vision, he becomes indifferent to what was visible to all others who approach Olympia—to a certain stiffness of manner which made her walk as if by the impulse of machinery,—to a paucity of ideas which induced her to express herself only in a few short but reiterated phrases,—in short, to all that indicated Olympia to be what she ultimately proved, a mere literal puppet, or automaton, created by the mechanical skill of Spalanzani, and inspired with an appearance of life by the devilish arts we may suppose of the alchymist, advocate, and weather-glass seller Copelius, alias Coppola. At this extraordinary and melancholy truth the enamoured Nathaniel arrives by witnessing a dreadful quarrel between the two imitators of Prometheus, while

disputing their respective interests in the subject of their creative power. They uttered the wildest imprecations, and tearing the beautiful automaton limb from limb, belaboured each other with the fragments of their clockwork figure. Nathaniel, not much distant from lunacy before, became frantic on witnessing this horrible spectacle.

But we should be mad ourselves were we to trace these ravings any further. The tale concludes with the moon-struck scholar attempting to murder Clara by precipitating her from a tower. The poor girl being rescued by her brother, the lunatic remains alone on the battlements, gesticulating violently and reciting the gibberish which he had acquired from Copelius and Spalanzani. At this moment, and while the crowd below are devising means to secure the maniac, Copelius suddenly appears among them, assures them that Nathaniel will presently come down of his own accord, and realizes his prophecy by fixing on the latter a look of fascination, the effect of which is instantly to compel the unfortunate young man to cast himself headlong from the battlements.

This wild and absurd story is in some measure redeemed by some traits in the character of Clara, whose firmness, plain good sense and frank affection are placed in agreeable contrast with the wild imagination, fanciful apprehensions, and extravagant affection of her crazy-pated admirer.

It is impossible to subject tales of this nature to criticism. They are not the visions of a poetical mind, they have scarcely even the seeming authen-

ticity which the hallucinations of lunacy convey to the patient; they are the feverish dreams of a light-headed patient, to which, though they may sometimes excite by their peculiarity, or surprise by their oddity, we never feel disposed to yield more than momentary attention. In fact, the inspirations of Hoffmann so often resemble the ideas produced by the immoderate use of opium, that we cannot help considering his case as one requiring the assistance of medicine rather than of criticism; and while we acknowledge that with a steadier command of his imagination he might have been an author of the first distinction, yet situated as he was, and indulging the diseased state of his own system, he appears to have been subject to that undue vividness of thought and perception of which the celebrated Nicolai became at once the victim and the conqueror. Phlebotomy and cathartics, joined to sound philosophy and deliberate observation, might, as in the case of that celebrated philosopher, have brought to a healthy state a mind which we cannot help regarding as diseased, and his imagination soaring with an equal and steady flight might have reached the highest pitch of the poetical profession.

The death of this extraordinary person took place in 1822. He became affected with the disabling complaint called *tabes dorsalis*, which gradually deprived him of the power of his limbs. Even in this melancholy condition he dictated several compositions, which indicate the force of his fancy, particularly one fragment entitled *The Recovery*, in which are many affecting allusions to

the state of his own mental feelings at this period; and a novel called *The Adversary*, on which he had employed himself even shortly before his last moments. Neither was the strength of his courage in any respect abated; he could endure bodily agony with firmness, though he could not bear the visionary terrors of his own mind. The medical persons made the severe experiment whether by applying the actual cautery to his back by means of glowing iron, the activity of the nervous system might not be restored. He was so far from being cast down by the torture of this medical martyrdom, that he asked a friend who entered the apartment after he had undergone it, whether he did not smell the roasted meat. The same heroic spirit marked his expressions, that "he would be perfectly contented to lose the use of his limbs, if he could but retain the power of working constantly by the help of an amanuensis." Hoffmann died at Berlin, upon the 25th June, 1822, leaving the reputation of a remarkable man, whose temperament and health alone prevented his arriving at a great height of reputation, and whose works as they now exist ought to be considered less as models for imitation than as affording a warning how the most fertile fancy may be exhausted by the lavish prodigality of its possessor.

# ARTICLE XI.

## THE OMEN.

[*The Omen.* *By* JOHN GALT, Esq. *Blackwood's Magazine, July*, 1824.]

THE Muse of Fiction has of late considerably extended her walk; and it will probably be admitted, that she has lent her counsel to authors of greater powers, and more extended information, than those who detailed the uninteresting Memoirs of Jenny and Jemmy Jessamy, and the like tiresome persons. The grave humour of Fielding—the broad comedy of Smollett—the laboured pathos of Richardson—the sentiment of Mackenzie and Sterne—are of course excluded from this comparison. But even these distinguished authors seem to have limited the subjects of fictitious composition to imaginary incidents in private life, and to displaying the influence of the ordinary passions of mankind—the world in which they and their readers lived, could show parallel instances of the adventures narrated, and characters to match in some degree with the personages introduced. But the modern novelists,

compelled, perhaps, by the success of their predecessors, to abandon a field where the harvest was exhausted, have, many of them, chosen elsewhere subjects of a different description. We have now novels which may take the old dramatic term of Chronicles; bringing real and often exalted persons on the stage; adorning historical events with such ornaments as their imagination can suggest; introducing fictitious characters among such as are real, and assigning to those which are historical, qualities, speeches, and actions, which exist only in the writer's fancy. These historical novels may operate advantageously on the mind of two classes of readers; first, upon those whose attention to history is awakened by the fictitious narrative, and whom curiosity stimulates to study, for the purpose of winnowing the wheat from the chaff, the true from the fabulous. Secondly, those who are too idle to read, save for the purpose of amusement, may in these works acquire some acquaintance with history, which, however inaccurate, is better than none. If there is a third class, whose delight in history is liable to be lessened by becoming habituated to the fairy-land of fiction, it must be confessed, that to them the historical romance or novel runs risk of doing much harm. But the readers liable to suffer by this perversion, are supposed to be but few in number, or, indeed, to merge almost entirely in the second class, since the difference is but nominal betwixt those who read novels, because they dislike history—and those who dislike history, because they read novels.

It is not, however, of historical novels that we are now about to speak, but of another species of these productions which has become popular in the present day, and of which the interest turns less upon the incidents themselves, than upon the peculiar turn of mind of the principal personage who is active or passive under them, and which character is not like Mackenzie's *Man of Feeling*, a picture improved from nature, but has something in it so exaggerated, as to approach the verge of the grotesque or unnatural. In such works, it is the character of the individual, not the events of the tale, which constitute the charm of the writing. There is a strong resemblance betwixt the novel of character, and what was called, in the seventeenth century, plays of humour, when the interest consisted in observing how particular incidents worked upon those of the *dramatis personæ*, to whom was assigned a natural or acquired peculiarity of sentiment and taste, which made them consider matters under a different light from that in which they appeared to mankind in general. The *Morose* of Ben Jonson, whose passion it is to have every thing silent around him, the *Volpone*, and almost all the principal characters of that able and learned dramatist, are influenced by some over-mastering humour, which, like the supposed influence of the planet under which he was born, sways and biasses the individual, and makes him unlike to the rest of his species even in the events most common to humanity.

Mr Godwin has been one of the masters in the

novel of character,—a title which we rather choose than that of humour, which has now acquired an almost exclusive comic meaning. The morbid sensibility of Fleetwood, and the restless speculating curiosity of Caleb Williams, are instances of his talent in that department. There is, perhaps, little general sympathy with the overstrained delicacies of Fleetwood, who, like Falkland in the *School for Scandal*, is too extravagant in his peculiarities to deserve the reader's pity. On the other hand, few there are who do not enter into and understand the workings of the mind of Caleb Williams, where the demon of curiosity, finding a youth of an active and speculative disposition, without guide to advise, or business to occupy him, engages his thoughts and his time upon the task of prying into a mystery which no way concerned him, and which from the beginning he had a well-founded conviction might prove fatal to him, should he ever penetrate it. The chivalrous frenzy of Falkland, in the same piece, though perhaps awkwardly united with the character of an assassin, that love of fame to which he sacrifices honour and virtue, is another instance of a *humour*, or turn of mind, which, like stained glass, colours with its own peculiar tinge every object beheld by the party.

In the elegant little volume which forms the subject of this article, we find another example of the novel of character, and indisputably a good one. The theme which he has chosen, as predominating in his hero's mind, a youth of a gentle,

melancholy, abstracted disposition, is a superstition as connected with an anxious and feverish apprehension of futurity—a feeling which, though ridiculed at one time, reasoned down at another, and stubbornly denied upon all, has, in one shape or other, greater weight with most men than any is willing to admit of himself, or ready to believe in another.

Men of the most different habits and characters in other respects, resemble each other in the practice of nursing in secret some pet superstition, the belief of which, though often painful to them, they cherish the more fondly in secret, that they dare not for shame avow it in public; so that many more people than the world in general is aware of, hold similar opinions with that of a distinguished sea-officer of our acquaintance, who, having expressed his general disbelief of all the legends of Davy Jones, Flying Dutchmen, and other mystic terrors of the deep, summed up his general infidelity on the subject with these qualifying words,—"one would not, to be sure, whistle in a gale of wind."

The reader will easily imagine that we do not allude to the superstition of the olden time, which believed in spectres, fairies, and other supernatural apparitions. These airy squadrons have been long routed, and are banished to the cottage and the nursery. But there exists more than one species of superstition entirely distinct from that which sees phantoms, a disease or weakness of the mind—not to be cured by Dr Alderson, or analyzed by

Dr Hibbert—amongst which is pre-eminent that which supposes our mind receives secret intimations of futurity by accidents which appear mysteriously indicative of coming events, by impulses to which the mind seems involuntarily subjected, and which seem less to arise from its own reflections, than to be stamped and impressed on the thoughts by the agency of some separate being;—this constitutes the peculiar superstition of the hero of the *Omen*. The events which he meets are all of a natural and ordinary character in themselves; it is the sensations of the augur by whom they are interpreted, which give them an ominous character.

This tendency to gaze beyond the curtain which divides us from futurity, has been the weakness of many distinguished names. Buonaparte secretly believed in the influence of his star—Byron had more than one point of superstitious faith—Sheridan had that horror of doing any thing on a Friday, which is yet common among the vulgar; and he took his late son Tom away from Dr Parr's school, because he had dreamed he had fallen from a tree and broken his neck. Other instances might be produced; some are no doubt affected, because to entertain a strange and peculiar belief on particular subjects, looks like originality of thinking, or, at least, attracts attention, like the wearing a new and whimsical dress in order to engage public notice. But those whom we have named were too proud, and stood too high to have recourse to such arts; they are the genuine disciples, to a certain

extent, of the mystic philosophy which the author of the *Omen* thus describes.

"Why are we so averse to confess to one another, how much we in secret acknowledge to ourselves, that we believe the mind to be endowed with other faculties of perception than those of the corporeal senses? We deride with worldly laughter the fine enthusiasm of the conscious spirit that gives heed and credence to the metaphorical intimations of prophetic reverie, and we condemn as superstition the faith which consults the omens and oracles of dreams; and yet, who is it that has not in the inscrutable abysses of his own bosom an awful worshipper, bowing the head, and covering the countenance, as the dark harbingers of destiny, like the mute and slow precursors of the hearse, marshal the advent of a coming woe?

"It may be that the soul never sleeps, and what we call dreams, are but the endeavours which it makes during the trance of the senses, to reason by the ideas of things associated with the forms and qualities of those whereof it then thinks. Are not, indeed, the visions of our impressive dreams often but the metaphors with which the eloquence of the poet would invest the cares and anxieties of our waking circumstances and rational fears? But still the spirit sometimes receives marvellous warnings; and have we not experienced an unaccountable persuasion, that something of good or of evil follows the visits of certain persons, who, when the thing comes to pass, are found to have had neither affinity with the circumstances, nor influence on the event? The hand of the horologe indexes the movements of the planetary universe; but where is the reciprocal enginery between them?

"These reflections into which I am perhaps too prone to fall, partake somewhat of distemperature and disease, but they are not therefore the less deserving of solemn consideration.—The hectical flush, the palsied hand, and the frenzy of delirium, are as valid, and as efficacious in nature, to the fulfilment of providential intents, as the glow of health, in the masculine arm, and the sober inductions of philosophy.—Nor is it wise, in considering the state and frame of man, to overlook how much the universal element of disease affects the evolutions of fortune. Madness often babbles truths which make wisdom wonder."

The facts by which this theory is illustrated are few and simple. The author is one of those whose "sense of being is derived from the past;" who

do not look forward to form splendid pictures of the future, but dote, with the constancy of infatuation, on those which exist in the gallery of memory. He does not form his conjectures of the future by comparing it with that which is present, but by auguries derived from events long passed, and deeply engraved upon the tablets of recollection.

These are of a solemn mystic air and tragic character. His infant years recall a vision of a splendid mansion, disturbed by signs of wo and violence, and the joyous remembrances of his childish play are interrupted by recollection of a wounded gentleman, and a lady distracted by sorrow. There are traces of a journey—the travellers, says the author,

"arrive at the curious portal of a turreted manorial edifice: I feel myself lifted from beside my companion, and fondly pressed to the bosom of a venerable matron, who is weeping in the dusky twilight of an ancient chamber, adorned with the portraits of warriors. A breach in my remembrance ensues; and then the same sad lady is seen reclining on a bed, feeble, pale, and wasted, while sorrowful damsels are whispering and walking softly around."

The author then finds himself residing by the sea-side, under charge of an old lady. Here he meets a solitary stranger who resides in the neighbourhood, and notices the child with much and mixed emotion; but being apparently recognised by Mrs Oswald, he disappears from the neighbourhood, and Mrs Oswald, finding the boy retained deeper impressions concerning his infantine years than she thought desirable, sets out with the purpose of placing him at school. In their journey they met a magnificent but deserted mansion; and the manner in which the author describes the reflections thus

awakened, forms a good specimen of the style and tone of the whole work.

"In seeking my way alone back to the vestibule, I happened to enter a large saloon, adorned with pictures and mirrors of a princely magnitude. Finding myself in error, I was on the point of retiring, when my eye caught a marble table, on which stood a French clock between two gilded Cupids. The supporters of the table were curiously carved into such chimerical forms as belong only to heraldry and romance. As I looked around at the splendid furniture with wonder and curiosity, something in the ornaments of that gorgeous table arrested my attention, and made a chilly fear vibrate through my whole frame. I trembled as if a spectre of the past had been before me, claiming the renovation of an intimacy and communion which we had held together in some pre-Adamite state of being. Every object in that chamber I had assuredly seen in another time; but the reminiscence which the sight of them recalled fluttered my innocent imagination with fear.

"A door, opposite to that by which I had entered, led to the foot of a painted marble staircase. I moved tremblingly towards it, filled with an unknown apprehension and awe. I could no longer doubt I was in the same house where, in infancy, I had witnessed such dismay and sorrow; but all was dim and vague; much of the record was faded, and its import could not be read. The talisman of memory was shattered, and but distorted lineaments could be seen of the solemn geni who, in that moment, rose at the summons of the charm, and showed me the distracted lady and the wounded gentleman, whose blood still stained the alabaster purityof the pavement on which I was again standing."

He makes no stay at this mansion, but is placed at a private school, where he forms an acquaintance with Sydenham, the natural son of a person of high rank, and goes down to his father's house with him to spend the holidays. Here occurs one of those touches of scenery and description, well drawn and not overcharged, which we consider as evincing the author's taste as well as his powers.

"The old magnificence of the castle, a rude and vast pile, interested me for the two first days.

"It stands on the verge of a precipice, which overshadows a smooth-flowing river. Masses of venerable trees surround it on the other three sides, from the midst of which huge towers, with their coronals of battlements, and cloaks of ivy, look down upon the green and bowery villagery of the valley, with the dark aspect of necromancy, and the veteran scowl of obdurate renown. It is indeed a place full of poesy and romance. The mysterious stairs, and the long hazy galleries, are haunted by the ever-whispering spirits of echo and silence; and the portraits and tapestries of the chambers make chivalry come again."

Now, considering how much has been of late said about old castles, we think there is a great merit indeed, in conveying, in a few and appropriate phrases, the poetical ideas connected with the subject.

At B— Castle he meets a Mr Oakdale, in whom he recognises the stranger of the sea-coast, and considering it as certain that he must be connected with the mysteries of his own fate, he forms, together with his young companion, a scheme to penetrate into the secret. This is disconcerted by the duke, Sydenham's father, who imparts to his son information to be carefully concealed from the party principally concerned. The effect on their boyish intimacy is natural and well described. Upon Sydenham's return from the interview with the duke,

"A spell was invoked upon his frankness; and while he appeared in no measure less attached, yea, even while he showed a deeper feeling of affection for me (for I often caught him looking at me with pity, till his eyes overflowed), it was but too evident that he stood in awe of my unhappy destiny, and beheld the spectre which ever followed me,—the undivulged horror, of which

my conscious spirit had only the dim knowledge, that dread and bodements sometimes so wonderfully and so inexplicably give."

The author is removed successively to Eton, and to Oxford; but (which seems rather improbable), although indulged in a large scale of expense, he receives no communication respecting his real fortune or rank in society. An eclaircissement on this point is prematurely forced forward, by one of those chances which govern human life. While he witnesses the play of *Hamlet*, the incidents of which sympathize with the gloomy forebodings of his own spirit, and with the recollections of his infancy, his eye suddenly falls on Mr Oakdale; and the emotions which that mysterious person evinces, press upon him the conviction that his own history resembled that of Hamlet.—"Shakspeare," he exclaimed to Sydenham, who, notwithstanding his reserve, was still his companion, "has told me that my father was murdered."

"Sydenham grew pale, and lay back in his chair in astonishment.

"'Nay more,' cried I, 'he has told me that the crime was caused by my mother.'

"Sydenham trembled and rose from his seat, exclaiming, 'Is this possible?'

"'Yes, and you have known it for years; and that Mr Oakdale is the adulterous assassin?'"

This discovery brings forth an explanation, which is undertaken by his maternal uncle, as he proves to be, General Oglethorpe. The author proves to be the heir of two considerable estates, and of those mansions which had impressed their appearance so strongly on his infantine imagina-

tion. His father had been killed or desperately hurt by Mr Oakdale, who had fled; his guilty mother had gone into farther irregularities. The veteran exacted a promise that he would never enquire after his mother; and, after a visit to his maternal seat, and to the ancient residence of his father, the young man agrees to his uncle's proposal that he should go abroad for some years.

"Those who look to *freits*," says the old Scottish proverb, with the sagacity which we boast as national, "*freits* (that is omens) will follow them." The morbid sensibility of young Oglethorpe—for such we suppose is his name, though never distinctly mentioned—detects allusions to his own misfortunes in incidents which he meets with on the road, and even in the fantastic rack of clouds which drive along the sky. The reasoning of a person who is disposed to read references to his own fate in what passes in heaven, or in earth around him, is poetically given in the following passage:—

"Surely it is the very error of our nature, a fantasy of human pride, to suppose that man can be wisely ruled by his reason. Are not all our sympathies and antipathies but the instructions of instinct—the guide which we receive direct, original, and uncorrupted from Heaven?

"It may be, that we cannot, like choughs and ravens, and the other irrational and babbling oracles of change—being so removed by habit from the pristine condition of natural feeling—predict from our own immediate sensations, the coming of floods and of thunder-storms, nor scent, like the watch-dog, the smell of death, before the purple spot or the glittering eye have given sign of the fatal infection; but have we not an inward sense that is often gladdened and saddened by influences from futurity, as the strings of the harp are prophetical of the mood and aspect of

to-morrow? Shakspeare has exquisitely described his belief in this philosophy :—

> 'The southern wind
> Doth play the trumpet to his purposes,
> And by his hollow whistling in the leaves,
> Foretells a tempest and a blust'ring day.'

And I believe myself to be possessed of the faculty whose power consists of this hereafter sort of discernment;—Sydenham used to call it my genius."

The subject of our tale is detained at Hamburgh, by an acquaintance formed with an English officer of rank, General Purcel, and his lady, but chiefly by the charms of their daughter Maria. The beauty and accomplishments of this young lady, and still more the delicacy of her health, and the apparent frail tenure on which she holds these gifts, are calculated to make a deep impression on the heart of the youthful visionary, whose temperament was as melancholy as his feelings were tender. Of course he becomes the lover of Maria, but experiences the strongest and most startling opposition on the part of Mrs Purcel, who, seeming on the one hand much, and even passionately attached to her daughter's admirer, declares herself, on the other, vehemently opposed to his suit. She is prevented from giving the grounds of her objections by some of those interruptions which are usually employed in romances to prolong the embarrassments of the *dramatis personæ*, and which perhaps are not in the present case very artificially interposed. Considering, as it proves to be the case, that Mrs Purcel was the guilty mother of the hero of the tale, and thus witnessed

the dreadful scene of her son making love to her daughter, it is impossible that she could have left to chance an explanation of such tremendous importance. So, however, it is; and General Purcel conceiving the objections of his wife to be founded on some frivolous aversion, or yet more capricious, and perhaps guilty, attachment to the lover of Maria, gives his consent to their private marriage. General Oglethorpe is written to for his approbation. Instead of answering the letter, the veteran comes to town, to explain, doubtless, the fearful mystery, but expires ere he can discharge the task. The private marriage is then resolved on, and is in the act of proceeding in the very church where the body of the deceased General Oglethorpe had been just interred.

"That such an unnatural mixture of irreconcilable rites should ever have been consented to by a creature so full of tenderness and of such unparalleled delicacy as Maria, is not the least wonder in our dismal story; but she was fastened to the same chain by which I was drawn on. It was thought by us that the horrible stratagem of joining the funeral and the wedding together would never be suspected by Mrs Purcel."

But Mrs Purcel had heard the intelligence. She bursts on the ceremony, and astounds them by the outcry, "Brother and sister—brother and sister!" —"I heard no more," continues the ill-fated narrator; "the edifice reeled around me—and there is a hiatus in my remembrance—a chasm in my life." The melancholy tale concludes thus:

"Ten years have passed since that dreadful morning, and I have never opened my lips to enquire the issues of the event; but one day, about two years ago, in visiting the English ceme-

tery at Lisbon, I saw on a marble slab, which the weather or accident had already partly defaced, the epitaph of Maria. The remainder of my own story is but a tissue of aimless and objectless wanderings and moody meditations, under the anguish of the inherited curse—But all will soon be over:—a tedious hectic that has long been consuming me, reluctantly and slowly, hath at last, within these few days, so augmented its fires, that I am conscious, from a sentiment within, I cannot survive another month; I have, indeed, had my warning. Twice hath a sound like the voice of my sister, startled my unrefreshing sleep; when it rouses me for the third time, then I shall awake to die."

The objection readily occurs to this tale, that the events are improbable, and slightly tacked together: but in these respects authors demand, and must receive, some indulgence. It is not perhaps possible, at the same time, to preserve consistency and probability, and attain the interest of novelty. The reader must make the same allowances for such deficiency, as are granted to the scenist, or decorator of the drama. We see the towers which are described as being so solid in their structure, tremble as they are advanced or withdrawn, and we know the massy and earth-fast rocks of the theatre are of no stronger material than painted pasteboard. But we grant to the dramatist that which must be granted, if we mean to allow ourselves the enjoyment of his art; and a similar convention must be made with the authors of fictitious narratives, and forgiving the want of solidity in the story, the reader must be good-natured enough to look only at the beauty of the painting.

It is perhaps a greater objection, that the nature of the interest and of the catastrophe is changed in the course of the narration. We are first led to

expect that the author had subjected the interest of his hero to that gloomy and inexorable deity, or principle, in whom the ancients believed, under the name of Destiny, or Fate, and that, like Orestes or Hamlet, he was to be the destined avenger of his father's injuries, or of his mother's guilt. Such was the persuasion of the victim himself, as expressed in several passages, some of which we have quoted. But the course of the action, the point upon which our imagination had been fixed, at the expense of some art, is altogether departed from. No more mention is made of Mr Oakdale, and though a fatal influence continues to impel the destined sufferer into most horrible danger, yet it is of a kind different from that which the omens presaged, and which the hero himself, and the reader, on his account, was induced to expect. For example, he meets on his road to Harwich with the funeral of a man who had been murdered, much in the same circumstances as those which attended the death of his own father, and which, while they indicate a bloody catastrophe to the story, bear no reference to that which really attends it.

But although these objections may be started, they affect, in a slight degree, the real merits of the work, which consist in the beauty of its language, and the truth of the descriptions introduced. Yet, even these are kept in subordination to the main interest of the piece, which arises from the melancholy picture of an amiable young man, who has received a superstitious bias, imposed by ori-

ginal temperament, as well as by the sorrowful events of his childhood.

In this point of view, it is of little consequence whether the presages on which his mind dwells, concur with the event; for the author is not refuting the correctness of such auguries, but illustrating the character of one who believed in them.

The tendency to such belief is, we believe, common to most men. There are circumstances, and animals, and places, and sounds, which we are naturally led to connect with melancholy ideas, and thus far to consider as being of evil augury. Funerals, churchyards, the howling of dogs, the sounds of the passing bell, which are all of a gloomy character, and, calamitous, or at least unpleasing in themselves, must lead, we are apt to suppose, to consequences equally unpleasing. He would be a stout sceptic who would choose, like the hero of our tale, to tack his wedding to the conclusion of a funeral, or even to place the representation of a death's-head on a marriage-ring; and yet the marriage might be a happy one in either case, were there not the risk that the evil omen might work its own accomplishment by its effect on the minds of the parties.

But besides the omens which arise out of natural associations, there are superstitions of this kind which we have from tradition, and which affect those who believe in them merely because others believed before. We have all the nurse has taught us of presages by sparkles from the fire, and signs from accidental circumstances, which, however they

have obtained the character originally, have been at least generally received as matters of ominous presage; and it is wonderful in how many, and how distant countries, the common sense, or rather the common nonsense, of mankind, has attached the same ideas of mishap to circumstances which appear to have little relation to it; and not less extraordinary to discover some ancient Roman superstition existing in some obscure village, and surprising the antiquary as much as when he has the good luck to detect an antique piece of sculpture or inscription on the crumbling walls of a decayed Scottish church.

Day-fatalism, which has been so much illustrated by the learned and credulous Aubrey, or that recurring coincidence which makes men connect their good and evil fortunes with particular days, months, and years, is another of the baits by which Superstition angles for her vassals. These fatalities, which seem to baffle calculation, resemble, in fact, what is commonly called a run of luck, or an extraordinary succession of good or evil, beyond hope or expectation. Such irregularities in the current of events are necessary to prevent human beings from lifting the veil of futurity. If the ordinary chances of fortune were not occasionally deranged, or set aside by those unexpected caprices of her power, Demoivre and his pupils might approach nearly to the rank of prophets.

In a third species of presage, our own mind, as we have hinted, becomes our oracle, and either from the dreams of the night, or the recollections of the

day, we feel impressed with the belief that good or evil is about to befall us. We are far from absolutely scorning this species of divination, since we are convinced that in sleep, or even in profound abstraction, the mind may arrive at conclusions which are just in themselves, without our being able to perceive the process of thought which produced them. The singular stories told about dreams corresponding to the future event, are usually instances and illustrations of our meaning. A gentleman, for instance, is sued for a ruinous debt, with the accumulation of interest since his father's time. He is persuaded the claim had been long settled, but he cannot, after the utmost search, recover the document which should establish the payment. He was about to set out for the capital, in order to place himself at the mercy of his creditor, when, on the eve of his journey, he dreams a dream. His father, he thought, came to him and asked the cause of his melancholy, and of the preparations which he was making for his journey; and as the appearance of the dead excites no surprise in a dream, the visionary told the phantom the cause of his distress, and mentioned his conviction that this ruinous debt had been already settled. "You are right, my son," was the answer of the vision, "the money was paid by me in my lifetime. Go to such a person, formerly a practitioner of the law, now retired from business, and remind him that the papers are in his hands. If he has forgotten the circumstance of his having been employed by me on that occasion, for he was not my ordinary agent,

say to him, that he may remember it by the token that there was some trouble about procuring change for a double Portugal piece when I settled my account with him." The vision was correct in all points. The slumbering memory of the ex-attorney was roused by the recollection of the doubloon,—the writings were recovered,—and the dreamer freed from the prosecution brought against him.

This remarkable story we have every reason to believe accurate matter of fact, at least in its general bearings. Now, are we to suppose that the course of nature was interrupted, and that, to save a south-land laird from a patrimonial injury, a supernatural warning was deigned, which the fate of empires has not drawn forth? This we find hard to credit. Or are we, on the other hand, to believe, that such coincidences between dreams and the events which they presage, arise from mere accident, and that a vision so distinct, and a result which afforded it so much corroboration, were merely the effect of circumstances, and happened by mere chance, just as two dice happen accidentally to cast up doublets? This is indeed possible, but we do not think it entirely philosophical. But our idea is different from both the alternative solutions which we have mentioned. Every one is sensible, that among the stuff which dreams are made of, we can recognise broken and disjointed remnants of forgotten realities which dwell imperfectly on the memory. We are of opinion, therefore, that in this and similar cases, the sleeping imagination is actually weaving its web out of the broken realities of actual facts. The

mind, at some early period, had been, according to the story, impressed with a strong belief that the debt had actually been paid, which belief must have arisen from some early convictions on the subject, of which the ground-work was decayed. But in the course of the watches of the night, Fancy, in her own time and manner, dresses up the faded materials of early recollection. The idea of the father once introduced, naturally recalls to memory what the dreamer, at some forgotten period, had actually heard from his parent; and by this clue he arrives at the truth of a fact, as he might have done at the result of a calculation, though without comprehending the mode by which he arrived at the truth.

The subject, if prosecuted, would lead very far, and farther perhaps than is warranted by the subject of these remarks. It is possible, however, we may one day return to it.

# ARTICLE XII.

## HAJJI BABA IN ENGLAND.

[*The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan in England.* 2 *vols.* *By* J. MORIER, Esq. *The Kuzzilbash; a Tale of Khorasan.* 3 *vols.* *By* JAMES BAILLIE FRASER, Esq. —*From the Quarterly Review, Jan.* 1829.]

AN old acquaintance of ours, as remarkable for the grotesque queerness of his physiognomy, as for the kindness and gentleness of his disposition, was asked by a friend, where he had been? He replied he had been seeing the lion, which was at that *time* an object of curiosity—(we are not sure whether it was *Nero* or *Cato*—): "And what," rejoined the querist, "did the lion think of you?" The jest passed as a good one; and yet under it lies something that is serious and true.

When a civilized people have gazed, at their leisure, upon one of those uninstructed productions of rude nature whom they term barbarians, the next object of natural curiosity is, to learn what opinion the barbarian has formed of the new state of society into which he is introduced—what *the lion* thinks of his visiters. Will the simple, unsophisticated being, we ask ourselves, be more in-

clined to reverence us, who direct the thunder and lightning by our command of electricity—control the course of the winds by our steam-engines—turn night into day by our gas—erect the most stupendous edifices by our machinery—soar into mid-air like eagles—at pleasure dive into the earth like moles?—or, to take us as individuals, and despise the effeminate child of social policy, whom the community have deprived of half his rights—who dares not avenge a blow without having recourse to a constable—who, like a pampered jade, cannot go but thirty miles a-day without a halt—or endure hunger, were it only for twenty-four hours, without suffering and complaint—whose life is undignified by trophies acquired in the chase or the battle—and whose death is not graced by a few preliminary tortures, applied to the most sensitive parts, in order to ascertain his decided superiority to ordinary mortals? We are equally desirous to know what the swarthy stranger may think of our social institutions, of our complicated system of justice in comparison with the *dictum* of the chief, sitting in the gate of the village, or the award of the elders of the tribe, assembled around the council fire; and even, in a lower and lighter point of view, what he thinks of our habits and forms of ordinary life,—that artificial and conventional ceremonial, which so broadly distinguishes different ranks from each other, and binds together so closely those who belong to the same grade.

In general, when we have an opportunity of enquiring, we find the rude stranger has arrived at

some conclusion totally unexpected by his European host. For instance, when Lee Boo, that most interesting and amiable specimen of the child of nature, was carried to see a man rise in a balloon, his only remark was, he wondered any one should take so much trouble in a country where it was so easy to call a hackney-coach. Lee Boo had supped full with wonders; a coach was to him as great a marvel as a balloon; he had lost all usual marks for comparing difficult and easy, and if Prince Hussein's flying tapestry, or Astolpho's hippogryph, had been shown, he would have judged of them by the ordinary rules of convenience, and preferred a snug corner in a well-hung chariot.

From the amusing results arising out of such contrasts it has occurred to many authors, at different periods, that an agreeable and striking mode of enquiry into the intrinsic value and rationality of social institutions might be conducted by *writing* critical remarks upon them, in the assumed character of the native of a primitive country. Lucian has placed some such observations in the mouth of his Scythian philosopher, Toxaris. In modern times, the Turkish Spy, though the subject of his letters did not embrace manners or morals, had considerable celebrity. The interest of the famous political romance of Gulliver turns on the same sort of contrivance. But, perhaps, the earliest example of the precise species of composition which we mean, exists in the Memoranda imputed to the Indian Kings, and published in the Spectator. At a latter period, Montesquieu's *Persian Letters*, with Lord Little-

ton's imitation of that remarkable work, and Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World*, were designed to represent the view which might be taken of Parisian or London manners and policy, by a Persian sage in the one case, and a Chinese philosopher in the other. Still, however, the notable imperfection occurred in these representations, that neither Montesquieu, nor Littleton, nor Goldsmith was at all qualified to sustain the character he assumed. Usbeck and Lien Chi Altangi are scarcely different, after all, from Europeans in their language, views, and ideas. The Persian caftan and Chinese gown are indeed put on, but the Persian and Chinese habitual modes of thinking are not exhibited, any more than the language of either of these countries; the Frenchman's Persian might be a Chinese, or the Englishman's Chinese a Persian, without the reader being able to appeal to any satisfactory test for re-adjusting the machinery.

It is in this most essential particular that the *Travels of Hajji Baba* may claim a complete superiority over the works of those distinguished authors. The author of *Hajji Baba's Travels* writes, thinks, and speaks much more like an Oriental than an Englishman; and makes good what he himself affirms, that the single "idea of illustrating Eastern manners by contrast with those of England, has been his *Kebleh*, the direction of his Mecca." Hajji Baba, moreover, is not an Orientalist merely, but one of a peculiar class and character—a Persian, and differing as much from a Turk as a Frenchman from a German.

The English reader, however, as *he* is politely called, who is ignorant of all save what his own language can convey to him, might have been at some loss to trace the merits of such a work, without some previous acquaintance with the Persian manners, particularly as differing from those of other Oriental nations; since, however well acquainted he might be with the habits and manners of his own country, it is necessary, for the enjoyment of this work, that he should know something of the peculiar scale on which they are to be measured. This necessary information has been amply supplied by the *Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan*—in which we have a lively and entertaining history of the hero of the present work, his early adventures, mishaps, rogueries, with their consequences; all tending to prepare us for his experiences in England. There are few of our readers, probably, who have not perused this lively novel, which may be termed the *Oriental Gil Blas*, and enjoyed the easy and humorous introduction which it affords to the Oriental manners and customs, but especially to those which are peculiar to the Persians.

By what peculiar circumstances, in climate, constitution, education, or government, the national character is chiefly formed, has been long disputed; its existence we are all aware of; and proposing to travel, consider it as certain, nearly, that we have peculiar advantages to hope, and dangers to guard against, from the manners of a particular region, as that we shall enjoy peculiar pleasures,

or have to face peculiar inconveniences in its climate. The genius of the Persians is lively and volatile, to a degree much exceeding other nations of the East. They are powerfully affected by that which is presented before them at the moment—forgetful of the past, careless of the future—quick in observation, and correct as well as quick, when they give themselves leisure to examine the principles of their decision—but often contented to draw their conclusions too rashly and hastily. It is evident that the acuteness of a spectator of foreign manners is of the first consequence in rendering his lucubrations spirited and interesting; and that the erroneous results at which his precipitate ingenuity may often arrive, cannot fail to afford a proportional share of amusement. The errors of the dull are seldom productive of mirth; and the information which he may sometimes convey is so much alloyed by the natural stupidity with which it is amalgamated, that, to say truth, few persons care to be at the trouble of separating it, just as (since the Dutchmen gave up that task) it has not been thought worth while to extract the small quantity of silver which is contained in every ton of lead. It is he that is witty himself, says Falstaff, who is the cause of wit in others; and the mercurial Persian may be equally expected to afford entertainment in both capacities. But we may safely say, that, not amusement only, but instruction of a very serious kind is to be derived from considering the nature of some of the materials which are here under the management of a master.

Hajji Baba, as the reader probably well knows, is a roguish boy, the son of a barber of Ispahan, who becomes the attendant upon a merchant, is made prisoner by a band of Turcomans, with whom he is forced to become an associate, although, as in the case of Gil Blas, a private feeling of cowardice greatly aids the moral sense in rendering the profession disgusting to him. After having the signal glory of conducting the tribe to a successful enterprise on his native city, he escapes from the Turcomans to be plundered by his own countrymen—is reduced to be a water-carrier—a seller of tobacco, and at length a swindler. He emerges from this condition to become the pupil of the Persian physician-royal. From this situation he rises to the kindred dignity of an immediate attendant on the chief executioner, and, of course, a man of great consequence in a state where various gradations of violence, from a simple drubbing to the exercise of the sabre or bowstring, form the pervading principle of motion. In this last character a scene is introduced (the death of the unhappy Zeenab), tending to show that, though the author has chiefly used the lighter tints of human life, its darker shadows are also at his command. The consequences of this tragedy deprive Hajji of his post, and he is reduced to take sanctuary. He changes his manners, lays aside the military profession, and assumes airs of devotion—becomes a respectable character, somewhat allied to Sir Pandarus of Troy—but is once more involved in ruin by the superstitious and intolerant zeal of a Mollah

to whom he had attached himself. After such a series of adventures, he escapes to Constantinople, where he sets up as a seller of tubes for tobacco-pipes. Here, in the assumed character of a wealthy merchant of high Arabian extraction, he marries a wealthy Turkish widow; but, being detected as an impostor, is obliged to resign his prize. Finally, Hajji Baba obtains the protection of the grand vizier, and of the Shah himself in particular, by the great assiduity he displays in acquiring some knowledge of the European character, which the contest between the French and English, for obtaining superior influence at the court of Ispahan, had rendered an interesting subject of consideration in the councils of Persia. At length the celebrated mission of Mirzah Firouz—the same, we presume, with the well-known Abou Taleb, Persian envoy at the court of the late King in the years 1809 and 1810—determines the fate of Hajji Baba, who receives directions to attend it in the character of secretary. Here the original account of his adventures, published in 1824, closed, with a promise that, if they appeared to wish it, the public should be informed, in due season, of Hajji's adventures while in the train of the Persian ambassador to St James's.

The author has no reason to complain of that want of attention which will sometimes silence the most pertinacious of story-tellers,—yea, even the regular bore of the club-house, whose numbers he has thinned. Hajji Baba met with a universal good reception. The novelty of the style, which

was at once perceived to be genuine Oriental, by such internal evidence as establishes the value of real old China—the gay and glowing descriptions of Eastern state and pageantry, the character of the poetry occasionally introduced—secured a merited welcome for the Persian picaroon. As a picture of Oriental manners, the work had, indeed, a severe trial to sustain by a comparison with the then recent romance of *Anastasius*. But the public found appetite for both; and indeed they differ as comedy and tragedy, the deep passion and gloomy interest of Mr Hope's work being of a kind entirely different from the light and lively turn of our friend Hajji's adventures. The latter, with his morals sitting easy about him, a rogue indeed, but not a malicious one, with as much wit and cunning as enable him to dupe others, and as much vanity as to afford them perpetual means of retaliation; a sparrow-hawk, who, while he floats through the air in quest of the smaller game, is himself perpetually exposed to be pounced on by some stronger bird of prey, interests and amuses us, while neither deserving nor expecting serious regard or esteem;—and like Will Vizard of the hill, "the knave is our very good friend."

The rapid and various changes of individual fortune, which, in any other scene and country, might be thought improbable, are proper to, or rather inseparable from, the vicissitudes of a government at once barbaric and despotic, where an individual, especially if possessing talents, may rise and sink as often as a tennis-ball, and be subjected to the ex-

traordinary variety of hazards in one life, which the other undergoes in the course of one game. But, were further apology necessary for the eccentricity of some of the events, than the caprice of an arbitrary monarch, and the convulsions of a waning empire, we have only to compare the reverses represented as experienced by this barber of Ispahan, with the mighty changes which we ourselves have been witness to, affecting thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, powers. The mighty and overwhelming sway which seemed neither to have limits in elevation nor extent—that power, the existence and terror of which led to the collision of European politics in the court of Ispahan—where is it now, or what vestiges remain of its influence? We might as well ask where are the columns of sand which at night whirl over the broad desert, in number and size sufficient to be the death and grave of armies, and in the morning, sunk with the breath which raised them, are only encumbering the steps of the pilgrim, as hillocks of unregarded dust.

The terrible hurricane of moral passions which had vent in the French Revolution, and the protracted tempest of war which ensued, have, like the storms of nature, led to good effects; and of these not the least remarkable has been the connecting, in intercourse of feeling and sentiments, of nations not only remote from each other in point of space, but so divided by opinions as to render it heretofore impossible that the less enlightened, wedded as they were to their own prejudices, should have derived the slightest improvement, either in arts,

government, or religion, from the precept or example of their more cultivated allies. The idea of a certain literary influence being exercised by the English press at the court of Ispahan, would, twenty years ago, have sounded as absurd as to have affirmed that Prester John had studied Sir John Mandeville's Travels, or that the report of the guns fired in St James's Park, was heard on the terrace of Persepolis. And yet such an influence to a certain extent now exists, since it appears, from the following admirable epistle, that the Persian court were interested in, and touched by the satirical account of their manners in Mr Morier's novel, and felt that pettish sort of displeasure which, like the irritation of a blister, precedes sanative effects. We refer to a letter addressed *bonâ fide* to the author of Hajji Baba, by a Persian minister of state.

"*Tehran*, 21*st May*, 1826.

"My Dear Friend—I am offended with you, and not without reason. What for you write Hajji Baba, sir? King very angry, sir. I swear him you never write lies; but he say, yes—write. All people very angry with you, sir. That very bad book, sir. All lies, sir. Who tell you all these lies, sir? What for you not speak to me? Very bad business, sir. Persian people very bad people, perhaps, but very good to you, sir. What for you abuse them so bad? I very angry. Sheikh Abdul Russool write, oh! very long letter to the king 'bout that book, sir. He say you tell king's wife one bad woman, and king kill her. I very angry, sir. But you are my friend, and I tell king, Sheikh write all lie. You call me Mirza Firouz, I know very well, and say I talk great deal nonsense. When I talk nonsense? Oh, you think yourself very clever man; but this Hajji Baba very foolish business. I think you sorry for it some time. I do not know, but I think very foolish.

"English gentlemen say, Hajji Baba very clever book, but I think not clever at all—very foolish book. You must not be

angry with me, sir. I your old friend, sir. God know, I your very good friend to you, sir. But now you must write other book, and praise Persian peoples very much. I swear very much to the king you never write Hajji Baba.

"I hope you will forgive me, sir. I not understand flatter peoples, you know very well. I plain man, sir—speak always plain, sir; but I always very good friend to you. But why you write 'bout me? God know, I your old friend.

"P.S.—I got very good house now, and very good garden, sir—much better as you saw here, sir. English gentlemans tell me Mexico all silver and gold. You very rich man now, I hope. I like English flowers in my garden—great many; and King take all my china and glass. As you write so many things 'bout Mirza Firouz, I think you send me some seeds and roots not bad; and because I defend you to the king, and swear so much, little china and glass for me very good."—Vol. i. p. xvii.

That so hopeful a correspondence might not fall to the ground, the author of *Hajji Baba* returned an answer of a kind most likely to have weight with a Persian, and which we can all observe is, like Don Pedro's answer to Dogberry, "rightly reasoned; and in his own division." Like the letter to which it is an answer, it is a *chef-d'œuvre* in its way; but we have not room to quote it.

The author contends that irritation will lead to reflection, reflection to amendment. The Persians, he observes, are, in talent and natural capacity, equal to any nation in the world, and would be no less on a level with them in feeling, honesty, and the higher moral qualities, were their education favourable. To fix, therefore, the attention of the leading men of the nation on the leading faults of the national character, may have on them so powerful an effect, that the name of Morier *may* be remembered as the first who led the way to the

illumination of Persia by the introduction of English literature into the pavilions of Tehraun. We proceed to give some account of the present work.

Hajji, a man of consequence as being supposed to understand the manners of the Franks, and secretary to Mirza Firouz, the Persian Elchee or Ambassador to England, commences by collecting, in the most arbitrary manner, and by the most summary means, whatever he judges would *be most* acceptable at the court of Saint James's, as articles to be presented to the King of England. *Being* invested with plenary powers, he fails not to make a sweep of all he can find which is rich and rare, not failing to obtain a ransom from those whom he spares, and to detain, for his own private purse, a handsome per centage of the pillage which he accumulates. His collection of rarely-gifted slaves is edifying. Among them there is a guardian *of* the haram designed for the service of King George III., who is termed *Mûrwari*, or the pearl, as *being* the most vindictive, spiteful, and inexorable wretch of his species,—watchful as a lynx, wary as a jackal. To this treasure is added a negro prize-fighter, who can carry a jackass, devour a sheep whole, eat fire, and make a fountain of his inside. But the British ambassador at the court of Persia, being taken into their counsel, explains why neither the pearl nor the spoutman, nor even the property of an Ethiopian woman, whose constitution *could* dispense with sleep, and who was therefore destined to watch the royal couch of Britain, would be

acceptable to the venerable sovereign for whom they were intended,—the discussions on which topics are stated with much liveliness. Upon the same occasion was prepared and placed in the hands of the ambassador, that celebrated letter to her Majesty Queen Charlotte from the King of Persia's chief wife,—assuredly one of the most extravagant morsels of Oriental bombast that ever astonished European ears. Here is a modest sample.

"It is necessary that the sweet-singing nightingales of the pen of correspondence should warble some notes in the garden of affection, and open the buds of our design in performing the pleasing duty of acknowledging, with thanks, the receipt of the acceptable present of our beloved sister, which we have hung upon the neck of accomplishment. May your house, the dwelling of kindness and friendship, ever flourish. The duties of friendship point out the necessity of occasionally sprinkling drops from the cloud of the pen, to increase the verdure of the meadow of affection."—Vol. i. p. 43.

Before the Persians can profit a great deal from British literature, the extirpating hoes of criticism, to use their own figurative language, must root out a great variety of many-coloured flowers from the garden of eloquence, and they must learn to call the spade of the aforesaid, or any other, garden, by its proper name of spade. Their present eloquence is a debauched style of exaggeration, which communicates its character to thought and action, and is no more consistent with an improvement in taste, than cotton in the ears, or musk crammed into the nose, is compatible with the accurate exercise of these organs. On the other hand, there is some fancy and even wit in some

verses of the Persian poet-laureate, for the inscription of a small casket, which, on being opened, was found to contain on one side a miniature picture of the Shah, and on the other a mirror, in which the King of England, for whom it was designed, might see the reflection of his own face.

"Go, envied glass, to where thy destiny calls thee;
Go, thou leavest the presence of one Cæsar, to receive that of another.
Still thou bearest within thee thy sovereign's form;
And when thou'rt opened again by Britain's king,
Thoul't reflect not one Cæsar, but two Cæsars;
Not one brother, but two brothers;
Not one Jemsheed, but two Jemsheeds;
Not one Darab, but two Darabs."—Vol. i. p. 55.

We have no doubt that the mouth of Aster Khan, "the prince of poets," was crammed, upon this occasion, with sugarcandy, which is his usual and appropriate reward. We have few sweetmeats, as our readers are well aware, to spare for the use of any author, and the prince of poets must be pretty well satiated with them. We shall therefore only say that ingenuity and wit often find a ready alliance with affectation and absurdity elsewhere than in Eastern poetry.

The train of the ambassador to the Court of Saint James's has its divided interests and its intrigues. Mirza Firouz, though compelled to receive his high charge as a distinguished favour, is at the bottom convinced that it is designed as an honourable exile, conferred upon him at the instance of the grand vizier, who had become jealous of his influence with the sovereign; and with the same

strain of feeling he regards Hajji Baba, even while he finds himself obliged to treat him with some respect, as a spy over his conduct placed there by the prime minister. Hajji endeavours, by flattering attention and assentation of every description, to blunt the suspicion, and disarm the ill-will of his chief; but, though he occasionally seems to succeed, he is, *au fonde*, only tolerated.

At Erzeroum, one of the ambassador's retinue commits a theft, and deserts. He is seized and brought back, and his master orders his ears to be cropped. This comes to the ear of a personage who considers the proceeding as derogatory to his own authority, the embassy being now in the Ottoman territories. The pasha, in short, sends his principal chaoush, an old grave Turk with a white beard, to remonstrate with the ambassador in all civility; and the scene which followed is admirably descriptive of the composure of the formal, solemn, taciturn Osmanli, contrasted with the petulant fury of the vivacious Persian.

"The ambassador was surrounded by all his servants when the chaoush entered, and was still in the height of his fury at the delinquency of his running footman. He was pouring out a torrent of words, cursing first the day he had set out on this expedition, then the vizier who sent him, then the Turks and their country, when the solemn son of Osman interposed his *selam aleikum*, peace be with you! and took his seat with all due reverence.—'What has happened?' exclaimed the ambassador to his visiter. 'Nothing,' answered the chaoush.—'Have you seen what abomination that rascally countryman of ours has been committing?' said the ambassador. 'Please heaven, his father shall burn ere long. We are not such asses to let him escape gratis. Until I have got his ears into my pocket, not a

drop of water passes my lips; of that make your mind easy, O effendi!'—'The pasha, my master,' said the Turk, 'makes prayers for your happiness, and has desired me to inform you that such things cannot be.'—'What things cannot be?' exclaimed the ambassador with the greatest vivacity. 'What cannot be? Shall I not, then, cut of his ears? Ah! you know but little of Mirza Firoux, if you think so! By the sacred beard of the Prophet, by the salt of the shah, by the pasha's soul, and by your death, I would as soon cut off his ears (ears did I say? by Ali, and head into the bargain!) as I would drink a cup of water. We are rare madmen, we Persians; we do not stand upon trifles.'—'But,' said the Turk, totally unmoved by the volubility and matter of this speech, 'my master orders me to say that he is one of three tails, and that, therefore, no ears can be cut off in Arz Roum except by himself.'—'Three tails!' exclaimed the Mirza, 'three, do you say? If the pasha has three, I have fifteen; and if that won't do, I have a hundred; and if that be not enough, tell him that I have one thousand and one tails. Go, for the love of Allah, go; and tell him moreover, since he brings his three tails into the account, that the ears are off, off, off.' Then calling aloud to his ferash, and to two or three other servants, he said, in a most peremptory tone, 'Go, rascals, quick, fly, bring Sadek's ears to me this instant, I'll three tail him! If he had fifty ears I would cut them off.' Then turning to the chaoush, who had already got on his feet in readiness to depart, he said, 'May your shadow never be less. May God protect you. Make my prayers acceptable to the pasha, and tell him again, if he has three tails, I, by the blessing of the Prophet, have fifteen.'

"Upon this the Turk, exclaiming from the bottom of his gullet, '*La illahu illallāh!* there is but one God,' walked slowly away, and had not proceeded many steps before he met the Persians coming up, bearing the ears of their countryman, or something very like them, on the cap of a saucepan, and who did not fail to exhibit them to the phlegmatic Osmanli with appropriate expressions of superciliousness."—Vol. i. *pp.* 74–77.

After all, the ambassador was himself cheated; for his retinue suffered the rogue to escape uncropped, and exposed, to satisfy their master's in-

dignation, two slices of a young kid, in lieu of the pairings of his ears.

After this adventure, these travellers proceed to Constantinople, where the kindness of a Turk adds to their retinue a Circassian slave, whose company, and the manner in which she was to be treated, added somewhat to the niceties of the envoy's situation. They next reached Smyrna, where they were to be received on board of a British frigate. But when summoned to embark, and avail themselves of a favourable wind, a most violent opposition arose on the part of the envoy and his astrologer Mohammed Beg, who declared that the stars had not announced a propitious moment; and that, to weigh anchor at the command of an infidel, merely because the wind blew fair, would be downright madness. Fortunately, both the envoy and his astrologer sneezed twice in the course of the debate, which, being admitted as a happy omen, sufficient to counterbalance a dark horoscope, they embarked with the mehmandar, a young English officer, appointed to serve as their interpreter. Their surprise at what they saw on board, and at the wonders of Malta, together with their indignation at the unexpected restraints of the quarantine, we shall pass over, but cannot omit the following passage concerning the ceremonial of the table, —a matter conventional in itself, but yet so knitted up in the opinion of every country with the whole system of civility and good-breeding, that nothing affords more ground for ridicule or offence than the slightest breach of its etiquette.

"When it is remembered how simple are the manners of our board, where nothing is seen upon the cloth, save the food placed in various sized bowls and dishes, and spoons of different denominations for taking up the liquids, no one will be astonished when I say that we were quite puzzled at what we saw upon an English table. It absolutely bristled with instruments of offence. We saw knives, with long glittering blades of all sizes and descriptions, sufficient in number to have ornamented the girdles of the shah's household, as well as a variety of iron claws, looking like instruments of torture for putting out eyes, or running into criminals' bodies. To these were added pincers, trowels, scoops, spoons of all shapes, and contrivances so numerous that it would take up a whole life to learn their use; and for what purpose? merely to transfer the food from the dish to one's mouth. It is to be imagined that we were very awkward when we first adopted this new mode of eating, we who had been accustomed from our childhood simply to take every thing up in our fingers, and carry it with comfort and security to our mouths, without the dangerous intervention of sharp instruments. The ambassador, however, determined from the beginning to persevere; and so did I, in order not to have the daily mortification of being laughed at by the infidels, which they always seemed very ready to do whenever they discerned any thing in our habits of life that differed from theirs. Our first essays were rather disastrous, for my chief, in wielding his knife, had nearly cut off one of his fingers; and I, forgetting the claw which I held in my hand, eating for a moment as usual with my fingers, almost put out my eye by running the horrid instrument into my face. Then there were ceremonies without end, of which we could not comprehend the necessity. It is proper etiquette that the food in the large dishes should first make a deviation from the straight line to one's mouth, by resting on certain smaller plates before each guest. Then it is not lawful to drink from the jug or bottle at once, but the liquor must first be poured into subsidiary glasses, whilst each sort of mess has its appropriate spoon. It is improper to eat butter with the spoon for soup, or to swallow the soup with a butter ladle. To take up a fowl whole in one's hand would be a mortal sin; much more to offer a bit to one's neighbour, which with us is reckoned so high an honour. In short, to describe the novelties which came under our consideration at every moment, would require more patience than so unworthy a servant of the prophet as I possess."—Vol. i. pp. 133–136.

The arrival of the envoy at Plymouth, and the transference of the suite to London by the rapid and novel vehicle called a mail coach, are described with corresponding spirit. Their doubts and difficulties increased as they reached London; the envoy conceived himself disgraced because no deputation met him before he entered the capital; the suite were puzzled how to arrange themselves in the splendid lodgings with which they were provided. They were incommoded with the excess and variety of the accommodation.

"For instance, we found chairs of all fashions; some to keep one's legs up; some to let them down; some to loll with the right arm; some with the left; others to support the head. Now, this to us, who have only one mode of sitting, namely, upon our heels, appeared an excess of madness. Then there was one set of tables to dine upon, another set for writing, others again for washing and shaving. But where should I end were I to attempt description? The same difficulties existed about the rooms. The room in which the servants had established themselves, was one appropriated for eating. To eat any where else is improper —to sleep there would be sacrilege—to make a bath of it would create a rebellion. Then above this were several large apartments, with couches placed in various corners, where the whole of us might have slept most conveniently; but these we were informed were the Franks' *dewan khaneh*, where the masters received their visiters."—Vol. i. pp. 204,

But if the simplicity of the Persians' mode of living rendered them subject to embarrassment, from the complexity of European accommodation, the elchee was still more thrown off his balance by the unexpected ease of British diplomacy. Mirza Firouz was disposed to make fight, as the expression goes, and to contest with vigour every preliminary form in the negotiation. The mode, when,

how, and with what degree of ceremony, he should meet the minister, and what honours should be rendered on either side, oppressed him as considerations of the deepest import. But he was spared the trouble of fatiguing his brains on these valuable punctilios, for the King of England's vizier for foreign affairs, as well as his first vizier or prime minister, came at once to pay him the usual compliments, without making the least scruple on the subject. The Persian embassy were petrified at gaining a point, so important in their eyes, without a moment's debate. They were still more astonished at learning that one of the personages, thus neglectful of ceremony, was no other than the far-renowned conqueror of Tippoo Sultaun.

A visit even more interesting than that of Lord Cornwallis, was that of the visible representatives of that metaphysical and abstract idea of a sovereign—personified in India, sometimes as *Mother* Company, whose sons conquer kingdoms with the one hand, and gather rupees with the other, *and* sometimes as John Company, whose salt is eaten by about a hundred thousand of sepoys. The avatar, or earthly descent of this (to an Oriental) incomprehensible personage, appeared before the astonished elchee in the form of two common infidels, whom the ambassador and his suite (having hurried to the window upon their being announced) beheld standing by an old hackney coach, and wrangling with the driver for his fare. These, Hajji Baba learned, were the king and deputy king of Ind—the breathing successors to the throne of Aureng-

zeb, Jehangir, and Shah Allum—in a word, the chair and deputy chair (as their interpreter explained himself, pointing first to a chair, and then to a stool, in illustration of his meaning). On further explanation, the strangers learn that, though the personages who visited them,

"possessed kingdoms, they were not in fact kings; that the revenues of these kingdoms did not belong to them, but to others who enjoyed the fruits of them; that they were partly concerned in occasionally sending out a king, or *firmas firmai*, to Calcutta; but that they, their Indian king, their fleets, their armies, were subject to another greater personage still, who was one of the King of England's viziers, who lived in a distant corner of the city, and that he again was the immediate servant of the real Shah of England and of Hindostan.

"Bewildered with this complication of real kings, and little kings, viziers, sitters upon chairs, and sitters upon stools, we held (says Hajji Baba) the finger of suspense upon the lip of astonishment, and pondered upon all we had heard, like men puzzling over a paradox. At length our visiters took their leave, and the ambassador promised that he would shortly fix a day for getting better acquainted with 'Coompani,' of whom he and his countrymen had heard so much, and about whose existence it became quite necessary that Persia should, for the future, have clear and positive information. Instead of reascending their crazy coach, the kings (for so we ever after called them) walked away upon their own legs, and mixed unknown and unheeded in the common crowd of the street.

"When they were well off we all sat mute, only occasionally saying, 'Allah, Allah! there is but one Allah!' so wonderfully astonished were we. What? India! that great, that magnificent empire!—that scene of Persian conquest and Persian glory!—the land of elephants and precious stones, the seat of shawls and kincobs!—that paradise sung by poets, celebrated by historians more ancient than Irân itself!—at whose boundaries the sun is permitted to rise, and around whose majestic mountains, some clad in eternal snows, others in eternal verdure, the stars and the moon are allowed to gambol and carouse! What! is it so fallen, so degraded, as to be swayed by two obscure mortals, living in regions that know not the warmth of the sun? two swine-eating infidels,

shaven, impure, walkers on foot, and who, by way of state, travel in dirty coaches filled with straw! This seemed to us a greater miracle in government than even that of Beg Jan, the plaiter of whips, who governed the Turcomans and the countries of Samarcand and Bokhara, leading a life more like a beggar than a potentate."—Vol. i. pp. 265–268.

The Persian envoy was not doomed to be gratified by every thing which occurred in his intercourse with the British court. He is described by Hajji Baba as being astonished and displeased at finding that his first audience of the sovereign is likely, from some circumstance of the English monarch's convenience, to be deferred beyond the period he had contemplated. This was a great subject of grief and anger, the more so, as all the Persian vehemence could not move the phlegm of the English ministry, and hardly that of the mehmandar, or interpreter.

The hour of audience being at length fixed, the envoy is informed that he is to proceed to the palace, there to be presented to the Shah of England, by his vizier for foreign affairs, and to deliver his credentials. The elchee exclaims bitterly against the commonplace character of such a reception, as altogether unworthy of his own character and the dignity of the sovereign who occupies the most ancient throne in the world.

"'When your ambassador,' said Mirza Firouz, 'reached the imperial gate of Tehran, was he received in the manner that I have been here? No. The King's *amous* was sent to welcome his arrival before he even entered the city. And when he proceeded to his audience, the streets were lined with troops, salutes were fired, sugar was thrown under his horses' feet; drums, trumpets, and cymbals resounded throughout the city; the bazars were dressed; the populace were ordered to pay him every respect. He was clothed with robes of honour, and he was allowed

to stand in the same room in which the king of kings himself reposed. And, by the beard of the prophet, I swear that if I am not treated in the same manner, I will proceed as a private individual to the palace, I will ask to see the king, I will place my shah's letter into his hands, and having said my *khoda hafiz shumah*, May God take you into his holy protection, I will straightway leave the country, and return whence I came.

" ' That may be very well to say, as far as you are concerned,' said the mehmandar, ' but my sovereign is somebody also, and is likely to be consulted on this question. Suppose he were not to agree to your visit?' We saw the storm was impending, and that the mehmandar's words might as well have remained at the bottom of his throat. The ambassador's face was thrown upside down; the hairs of his beard became distended; and he oozed at every pore. ' In short, then,' said the ambassador, his eyes flashing fire, ' am I an ambassador, or am I not?'—' Is my king a king, or is he not?' said the mehmandar, to which, angry as he was, in his own language, he mumbled something to himself about ' dam, or dammy,' which word caught the Mirza's ear, and he, recollecting it to have been frequently used on board ship, mistook it as an epithet applied to himself, and his wrath then broke out something in the following words: ' *Dam*, do you say? Am I *dam*? If I am *dam*, then you are the father of *dam*. Why should I remain here to be called *dam*? After all I am somebody in my own country. I will defile the grave of *dam's* father. I will do whatever an ass can do to his mother, sister, wife, and all his ancestry. I am not come all this way to eat *dam*, and to eat it from such hands.' Upon which he flung out of the room, leaving the mehmandar to open the eyes of astonishment, and to eat the stripes of mortification."—Vol. i. p. 238.

The mehmandar, with perfect composure, buttoned his coat, took his hat, and wished them all a good-morning. The envoy, however, now becomes alarmed that, in his zeal for maintaining his dignity, he might have overacted his part, and thrown some serious impediment in the way of the proposed audience. At length, real impatience and anxiety getting the better of all airs of dignity, he

sends Hajji to the mehmandar, with an orange in his hand, and a courteous invitation to dinner. At the appointed hour, accordingly, the interpreter appears, calm and undisturbed as usual, and is most kindly received by the Persian, and caressed, as a man who had acquired wisdom in the East, and knew the folly of being really angry on such occasions.

"To this the mehmandar answered, 'May your friendship never diminish. I have made known your wishes to the vizier for foreign affairs.'—'Well,' said the ambassador, all of a sudden excited, 'and what did he say?'—'He said,' returned the infidel, 'that there would be no difficulty in giving you a public audience. We have plenty of troops, and plenty of coaches, abundance of fine clothes, and fine things, and you shall go before the king, accompanied in any manner you choose.'—'Wonderful!' exclaimed the ambassador, 'wonderful! I do not understand you English at all! You make no difficulties. You leave no room for negotiation.'—'Not upon trifles,' returned the mehmandar. 'Trifles? do you call an ambassador's reception a trifle?' said Mirza Firouz. 'There is not a step made on such an occasion as this in Persia which is not duly measured. And do you call the dignity of sovereigns nothing?'—'The nations of Europe were fools enough in times past,' said the mehmandar, 'to make matters of etiquette affairs of state, and they used to lose intrinsic advantages in pursuing these ideal ones; but they are become wiser; we look upon etiquette now as child's play. However, in consideration of your being Persians, and knowing no better, we do not hesitate in giving you as much of it as you please.'

"Upon this the ambassador stroked his beard, pulled up his whiskers, and sat for some time in deep thought. He felt himself lowered in the estimation of the Franks, whilst, at the same time, he was aware that he could not act otherwise than he had done. At length he exclaimed, 'And so the English think that we are men from the woods, asses, beasts of burden, and know nothing of what the world is about? Be it so, be it so. But this know, that a nation who can trace its ancestry to Jemsheed; who counts a Jenghis Khan, a Tamerlane, a Nadir Shah, an Age

Mohamed Khan, ay, and a Fatteh Ali, amongst its kings, is not accustomed to child's play, and, moreover, is not at all inclined to take example from the kings of Frangistaun for any part of its conduct in matters relating to its own dignity.' "—P. 245.

The audience finally proceeds as originally proposed, the acute tact of the Persian having discovered, that, to insist upon vanities willingly and indifferently conceded, would be placing himself in the rank of a froward child, or a barbarian, ignorant of the points on which Europeans rest real consequence.

This entertaining passage touches a point in the chapter of human society which leads to some reflections. The time is not so very distant when the English court would have reasoned on such a subject, in a manner not unworthy of that of Ispahan. When Sir John Finnett, the author of *Finetti Philoxenes*, acted as master of ceremonies to Charles I., Mirza would have encountered in him, beard to beard, or whiskers to beard at least, a zealous defender of those points of ceremony which modern ministers conceded with such easy contempt, and an antagonist, therefore, after his own soul. But one question remains, and it is an important one. We have turned over to oblivion and scorn the ancient superstitions of masters of ceremonies, and gentlemen ushers, about first and last in the order of reception, right and left in point of place, chairs and joint stools in respect of accommodation; nor would the Spaniards and French, in the suites of their respective ambassadors, be (without the interference of Townshend)

permitted, as of yore, to fight a bloody and fatal battle in the streets of London, on the important point whose carriage was entitled to precedence. The sense that ambassadors are sent for other purposes has got rid of all this foppery. But, we would ask, might not the reformation be carried further?—is it not worthy to be extended from the antechamber, where it has been achieved, into the cabinets themselves, where much, and of a most important character, remains to be done to *simplify* diplomacy? James I.'s witty character of an ambassador, that he was a man of quality sent *to lie* abroad for the good of his country, has, perhaps, been too deeply imprinted on the European system of conducting foreign relations. It is particularly unfavourable for the English nation, and advantageous for the political agents of other countries, who, by a dexterous employment of what is familiar to their habits, and alien to ours, have, for ages, been as remarkable for gaining as we for losing in diplomacy. An Englishman argues much *as he* handles his national weapon in a private quarrel. He can make a shift to apply one sound argument as substantial and as solid as a lead bullet, to the comprehension of his adversary, by whom it must often be admitted as sufficing. But, in the small-sword logic, the tierce and quarte of diplomatic finesse, he is almost sure to be foiled. The progress of time has thrown general light on all manufactures, trades, and even professions, and has *dispelled* the mist in which interested persons had involved them; the more that the *mysteries*, as

they were termed, attached to peculiar employments, have been removed, the more powerful has been the assistance they have received from true science. The same rule would doubtless apply to diplomatic arrangement, if conducted on a more frank, explicit, and open principle, than that of the tortuous *détours*, *finesses*, &c.—(we are glad the vocabulary is not English)—hitherto held almost inseparable from the science. The diplomacy of Napoleon was conducted with all states inferior in power, on the principle of *sic volo sic jubeo*, and his decisive argument was the circle which the Roman consul drew round the Eastern monarch. This put finesse and subterfuge much out of the question, and these were only resumed in his negotiations with Great Britain. On these occasions, the protracted contest, though maintained by the most able combatants, somewhat resembled that of men fighting in the armour of their great grandfathers. The old tricks of the diplomatic science, ever since this palpable exposure, have been falling into as much disrepute as *Barbara Celarent*. Its disguises are now too threadbare to serve the purpose of concealment. Above all, the selfish, narrow-minded, and most impolitic principle that each state ought to act, and had a right to act, for its own separate advantage, in seizing whatever advantage, craft, or superior force could secure for it, has been severely expiated by universal suffering, and though it cannot perhaps be altogether expelled from the bosoms of sovereigns and statesmen, will be no longer unblushingly avowed. The

time was when Joseph II., thinking he had a fair opportunity to subdue Turkey in Europe, gave the King of Prussia to understand very frankly, that the only rule of peace or war which sovereigns could be bound by, was the probability of their being defeated, or successful—in other words, the same principle on which gamesters draw near the hazard table, and highwaymen take the road.[1] This wretched system of senseless egoism, after having engaged Europe in such a succession of mutual injuries, aggressions, and wrongs, until, like skirmishes of the frogs and mice, the feuds were ended in the general subjugation of the continent, has been fortunately counteracted, and for the present exploded; and, we believe, most civilized states have arrived at the wholesome conclusion, that true policy does not consist in the struggles of a nation for its own aggrandizement, but in the union of the whole European republic towards promoting the peace and happiness of the civilized world. If this be now in a great measure recognised as the object of public treaties, it seems to follow that an object so fair, and manly, and meritorious, will be best furthered by being stated and followed up by plans and arguments of the same candid character. Persons proposing each some

[1] See this unblushing avowal in a very interesting work, entitled, *Mémoires d'un Homme d'Etat*, which contains much authentic information concerning the state of Europe at the commencement, and during the progress of the French Revolution. We believe it is justly attributed to the pen of Prince Hardenberg, one of the few truly great statesmen of our own times.

sinister advantage to himself, naturally conceal their real objects under the jargon of contending attorneys, to whom peace is war. But men united in the honest purpose of seeking that which is best for the whole, get rid as soon as possible of the grimgribber of negotiation, and resort to the language of common reason and common sense, because that which is unquestionably just always gains by being made completely intelligible. A fair experiment of this nature was made long since, when the plain and downright integrity of Sir Andrew Mitchell was found too many for the refined policy of the wily Frederick, the most subtle of negotiators, and when the English ambassador, merely by dint of speaking truth, raised at once his own character and that of his country into weight and authority. The present time, too, is highly favourable for simplifying the subtleties of public diplomacy, since no minister ever could know better than our present premier the superiority of Corporal Trim's single thrust of the bayonet, the determined aim and irresistible vigour of which bears down all fine fencing in action, and all metaphysical subtleties in logic. Let us speak a frank word, for it is a true one. Subtlety is not our national characteristic, and when we engage in the recondite mazes of diplomacy, we attempt a game which we do not understand, and from which, therefore, we are not likely to rise winners. Since the time of Philip de Commines, who first made the remark, "the English have commonly lost in negotiation what they have gained in war." This

could not, surely, be the case, were our diplomacy conducted on the principles of plain reason and common sense.

We ask pardon of our readers for a digression to which, in truth, the work before us affords no apology, since, differing in that particular from Montesquieu and Lord Littleton, the author of Hajji never suffers the lucubrations of his Persian to touch upon politics, whether of a general or national character, confining his subjects almost entirely to criticisms on manners and customs.

The ambassador—whose liberal mode of thinking, and shrewdness of perception of character, though mingled of course with national prejudice and a good deal of national roguery, are not to be disguised—is, we conclude, the same Mirza whose wit and talents excited a strong sensation in the fashionable world about eighteen or twenty years ago, and whose person, character, and manners made the subject of a small and agreeable pamphlet by Lord Radstock, which, though not published, was, we believe, pretty generally circulated. There was in the manner of Mirza all the address and dexterity of a courtier, with some points which seemed to indicate a deeper degree of reflection than we are accustomed to connect with the idea of a Mussulman. His repartees were often repeated at the time, and lost none of their effect in coming forth by the medium of bearded lips, from a head swathed round with a turban. His jests were regulated with much delicacy. He could, on occasions, be severe enough, but it was always when time and place

served. A profound blue-stocking once teased him with enquiries whether they did not worship the sun in Persia. "O yes, madam," said Mirza, with perfect coolness, "and so would you in England too—if you ever saw him." Mirza, while residing in Britain, made a *progress*, on which occasion he showed that he completely understood the duty of tourists who would act in character, to ask a certain number of questions, with a becoming degree of indifference as to the manner in which they may be answered. For example, when he visited a large public library at one of the universities, he looked round the room, "Fine room—great many pillar—are they stone pillar?—wood pillar?" His cicerone, who had a slight impediment in his speech, not answering immediately, Mirza went on, "You do not know?—very well—very many book here—are they printed book or written book?" There was a similar hesitation; "You do not know? very well." In Edinburgh he visited the old palace of Holyrood, whose gallery is garnished with a most fearful and wonderful collection of pictures, said to be portraits of the hundred and six ancestors of gentle King Jamie, which we believe were originally painted to grace the entrance of his unhappy son Charles into his Scottish metropolis in 1633. Mirza no sooner beheld this collection of scarecrows than, being a critic as well as a wag, he turned to the old lady who showed the apartments:—"You paint all these yourself!" "Me, sir—no, no—I canna paint any thing, please your honour." To which Mirza answered, "You

not know, ma'am—you try, ma'am—you do a greater deal better, ma'am." Such was, in his actual reality, Mirza Abou Taleb, the prototype of Hajji's patron whose character, therefore, is not overcoloured by our tell-tale secretary.

Additional interest is given to the narrative by the contrasted lights in which the same incidents are seen by the envoy and Hajji (both of whom are somewhat indifferent, or, at least, very liberal in matters of religious belief), and the master of ceremonies, Mahomed Khan,—a rigid Mussulman, and others of the suite who are zealous followers of the Arabian prophet. The Circassian, too, though a late convert to Islamism, became, as is the nature of her sex,—to say nothing of the nature of renegades—a violent assertor of the creed which she had so recently adopted. There was a dinner accepted by the envoy at the house of some wealthy Jew merchant, or banker, which liberality on Mirza's part drew on him reproaches from his mistress, his master of the ceremonies, and even from Hajji Baba himself. The Mirza is provoked beyond patience.

"'Oh, you dog without a saint!' said he to Mohamed Beg; 'are you a Mussulman to lie after this manner? why am I to bear all this want of respect? I am the shah's representative, and if the shah himself was here he would cut your head off; but as I am a good man I will only punish you with a few blows. Give him the shoe,' he cried out to several of us; and having named me as the principal agent, I was obliged to take off my slipper, and inflict on the mouth of my friend as many blows as I could. I went to work as quietly as possible; but with all my ingenuity I could not avoid knocking out a certain old and solitary tooth, which had stood sentry at the door of his mouth ever since the last reign.

"The poor sufferer left the ambassador in pain and anger. I heard him vow eternal vengeance; and to me he said, 'Oh you of little fortune! why would you hit my tooth! You did better things when you were a ferash, and beat men's toes.'

"I swore upon the sacred book that I was without help, that I was ordered to strike; and I only begged that if he were ever obliged to do the same to me that he would not spare me."—Vol. ii. p. 271.

But it is an amourette of our adventurous friend Hajji Baba which chiefly interested us. The gallant secretary had made an acquaintance at Astley's (which place of amusement he calls the horse-opera) with a father, mother, and three daughters, the first of whom was a devotee, who converted Jews, and made stockings for the poor; the second, beautiful and fashionable; the third was not come out yet, but had a tendency to blue, in the garter at least. All this was made known to our Hajji by the loquacity of the mother, who expatiated upon the wealth and generosity of her husband.

"'*Mashallah!* praises to Allah!' said I, 'he is also very fat;' and I added, 'what may his fortunate name be?'—'Hogg, at your excellency's service,' said she. 'It is an old Scotch family, and we flatter ourselves that we come from some of the oldest of the stock.'—'*Penah be khoda!* refuge in Allah!' exclaimed I to myself; 'a family of the unclean beast! and old hogs into the bargain! My luck is on the rise to have fallen into such a set. And pray what may yours and the young ladies' names be?' said I. 'We're all Hoggs too,' said the mother."

This leads to a visiting acquaintance, which the secretary keeps private from the ambassador, the ambitious Ispahani having in secret nourished hopes of securing the affections and property of the beautiful Miss Bessy Hogg. The ladies, on their

part, had adopted some idea that their Eastern friend was a mirza, or prince, which Hajji Baba failed not to confirm, gaining thus an amazing step in their favour.

"This being established, it was quite amusing to observe the rate at which they started with the word 'Prince,' as if it had never crossed their lips before. Whatever they addressed to me was prefaced with that monosyllable, until at length, in my own defence, I was obliged myself to ask a few questions. '*Where is your papa?*' said I to the beautiful Bessy. The mamma answered, 'He is gone into the city; he attends to his business every day, and returns in the evening.'—'*Ah! then,*' said I, '*he is merchant—same in my country:—merchant sit in bazar all day, at night shut up shop, and come home—What he sell, ma'am?*'—'Mr Hogg,' said the lady, with some dignity, 'does not keep a shop, he is an East India merchant.'—'*Then perhaps he sell ham,*' said I, thinking that his name might be a designation of his trade, as it frequently is in Persia. 'Sells hams!' exclaimed the lady, whilst her daughters tittered. 'Why should he sell hams, prince?'—'*Because he one Hogg, ma'am. In our country, merchant sometime called after the thing he sells.*'—'La, prince!' exclaimed the lady, 'what an odd custom. Hogg is an old family name, and has nothing to do with the animal. There are Hoggs both in England and Scotland.'—'You might as well say, prince,' remarked the young Jessy, 'that Sir Francis Bacon, the famous Lord Verulam, was a pork butcher.'—'And that all our Smiths,[1] Taylors, Coopers, Bakers, Cooks, and a thousand others, were representatives of their professions,' added Bessy. 'Well, I never heard any thing like it,' summed up the mamma. 'Mr Hogg a ham-seller indeed! La, prince! what could you be thinking of?'"—Vol. ii. p. 93.

This false step is soon repaired; and, by dint of his supposed quality, our friend Hajji, whom no scruple or fear of consequences ever deters from

[1] The prince did not know Verstegan's couplet, or he might have found an answer—

"Whence cometh Smith, be he lord, knight, or squire,
But from the clown that forged in the fire?"

prosecuting an immediate advantage, is invited to a splendid dinner by the family of Hoggs, and treated with such distinction, that he conceives himself to be on the point of making a conquest of the moon-faced object of his affections; whilst, on the other hand, he has no small reason to be apprehensive of the envoy's displeasure, should he be detected in the act of taking upon himself the character of a prince. This fact transpires, like most others, through the medium of the newspapers, which announce the grand entertainment given by those distinguished fashionables, Mr and Mrs Hogg, of No. —, Portland Place, to his Highness the Persian Prince Mirza Hajji Baba. Great is the displeasure of the ambassador; and great above measure is the embarrassment of his worthy secretary, justly suspected of being the illustrious prince who has shared the banquet of the unclean beasts, as the cousins of the Ettrick Shepherd are unceremoniously denominated; and as he endeavours to vindicate himself, with some warmth, against the charge of having eaten a good dinner, he draws on himself the discipline of the shoe-heel, applied repeatedly to his teeth by the envoy himself, while his hands are held by two of the assistants.

This mis-adventure does not prevent the enterprising secretary from persevering in his scheme on the heart and fortune of the lively Bessy. He is even able to extract some countenance from the ambassador, who, understanding that the damsel

has a fortune of fifty thousand tomauns, proposes that the profits of the adventure shall be fairly divided betwixt himself and his dependent, he getting the portion, and Hajji Baba the person of the lady. But, though this obstacle is removed, it is in vain that Hajji makes love in the Persian manner, by rubbing his own shawl against the back of the young lady's pelisse; it is in vain too that he learns from an Englishman—(who had, probably, in his mind, the lively story of "Altham and his Wife,")—that there have been instances of love-tales being favourably received in England when told under an umbrella, and in the middle of a shower. Chance, assisted by his own dexterity, gave him the desired opportunity, with its adjuncts of the umbrella and the rain, which he considered as essential to a propitious explanation. But while, in the most correct style, we presume, of Persian adoration, he styles the young lady his *tooti sheker khur*, or sugar-loving parrot, and invites her to "wife with him and live with him"—the lovely Bessy slips her arm from under that of her lover, and hints something of speaking to mamma. The prosecution of the story is, we think, a little caricatured. The father of the Hoggs, as Hajji calls him, is represented as applying to the ambassador, and to the mehmandar or interpreter, for the purpose of learning our friend's real character, birth, fortune, and expectations. Now, as the said Hogg is described as a wealthy India merchant, we think that he must certainly have known what wool a

Persian's red cap is composed of, and that it is impossible he could have thought for a moment of matching his daughter with a foreigner, of a false religion, and a barbarous country, while there were so many bachelors, good men on 'Change, and very good Christians, doubtless, to boot. It is wonderful, however, that in a work which afforded such tempting opportunities to push humorous incidents into extravagance, the author should have resisted the license, except only in the present instance. The appeal to the too veracious mehmandar is utterly destructive of Hajji Baba's tender hopes; and the moonfaced Bessy Hogg, instead of being made a princess after the desire of our Persian secretary, or the "lady" of a young long-spurred hussar officer, after her own inclinations, becomes the wife of a wealthy grocer, and her Oriental admirer is a resigned witness of the ceremony which, we doubt not, to her great ultimate comfort and satisfaction, makes her Mrs Figby.

The departure of the embassy, with all the preparatory bustle, and above all, the settlement of long bills which it involves, is described with the truth and spirit which characterise this lively work, and of which we have given so many instances. Hajji Baba returns safely to Persia. The wonders which he saw at the court of Britain he narrated before the throne of the Shah; was invested with a dress of honour; and dismissed from the royal presence with his head, like that of Horace, knocking against every star in the zodiac.

Before laying aside these two volumes, we cannot resist the temptation to turn back for a moment to the travels of Abou Taleb (reviewed in our 8th number), which are the production of a *bona fide* Mussulman. The advantage, of course, remains infinitely on the side of the work written to amuse, over that which was composed for the purpose of instruction. Such ludicrous errors as Hajji cherishes and records, his real prototype, when he fell into any of them, took especial care to conceal; giving us only the result of what he learned from matured consideration and experience. Abou Taleb deals, therefore, in matter of fact, and is most prosaic exactly where the secretary of the Persian embassy is most lively, imaginative, and absurd. It is odd that, though both works bear the marked impress of Oriental composition, they hardly evince an idea in common with each other, excepting that the authors show the same holy scruple at employing a brush composed of hog's bristles for the purposes of the bath. There is one political plan for the settlement of our national debt, which Abou Taleb does us the favour to suggest, and which in the Hajji's hands could not have failed to make a grand figure. Nothing could be more easy, he imagines, than to assemble the creditors of government in the presence of parliament, and inform them in plain language that they must instantly enter into a compromise, and agree to be contented with receiving a certain proportion of their debt. We have only to observe, that the

remedy seems to us to stop halfway; and that if the "Light of the Universe," or any other Oriental monarch had a parcel of troublesome creditors assembled in the Atmeidan, before the "refuge of the world," or whatever his palace might be called, he would probably make them glad to compound, not for half only, but for all their claims, merely by drawing up a few nasakchies around the congregation. How the remedy would work in Europe—under favour of the learned Oriental physician—the wise may make some drachm of a scruple.

Another work of considerable merit, belonging to the same class of composition, has attracted our favourable notice, though we are at present compelled to introduce it only in a very summary way. It is called the *Kuzzilbash*, that is, the "Redcap," by which is meant the Persian soldier, so named from the distinguishing part of his attire. This Oriental romance, for such it must be termed, displays an accurate and intimate acquaintance with the manners and customs, as well as the history of Persia. The power of description displayed in it, so far at least as external circumstances are concerned, is of a most rich and picturesque character. The author's pictures of natural scenery in the East, show an eye familiar with its beauties and its terrors; and indicate, we are tempted to think, no ordinary acquaintance with the art of the draughtsman. The following description of what had once been an ornamented garden, but was become a place of rendezvous for a marauding

tribe of Turcomans, might be easily transferred to canvass as a counterpart to Goldsmith's Auburn :—

" Just upon the edge of the bank, the little stream, after filling a canal, had been trained to fall over an artificial cascade of stone, the sides of which had been adorned with ornaments of the same; but the canal was almost obliterated, and the stone over which the water rushed was broken, and had fallen in such a manner as to confine the stream still more. A rude spout of stone had been placed so as to collect it in the basin below, and to enable the women to fill their water-vessels more easily. A huge old sycamore-tree, once the chief ornament of the garden, grew on one side and overshadowed the basin; and a vine, which had rooted itself among the broken stones, formed a still closer covering, protecting the water from the rays of the sun, so as to render it always cool and refreshing. It was a delicious spot, and had become the favourite rendezvous of the whole aoul: the women came morning and evening to fill their water-skins; the elders of the men met to smoke their calleeoons under the shade, and the youths to talk over their exploits performed or anticipated, to play at games of chance, and listen to the tales of a Kissago, or to gossip with the women; the children sported below upon the green bank, or threw themselves into the sparkling waters of the little lake at its foot."—Vol. i. pp. 59, 60.

The following sketch of a Persian cavalier has the richness and freshness of one of Heber's, or Morier's, or Sir John Malcolm's pages :—

" He was a man of goodly stature, and powerful frame; his countenance, hard, strongly marked, and furnished with a thick black beard, bore testimony of exposure to many a blast, but it still preserved a prepossessing expression of good-humour and benevolence. His turban, which was formed of a cashmere shawl, sorely tached and torn, and twisted here and there with small steel chains, according to the fashion of the time, was wound around a red cloth cap, that rose in four peaks high above the head. His oemah, or riding-coat, of crimson cloth, much stained and faded, opening at the bosom, showed the links of a coat-of-mail which he wore below; a yellow shawl formed his girdle; his huge shul-

wars, or riding trowsers, of thick fawn-coloured Kerman woollen stuff, fell in folds over the large red leather boots in which his legs were cased. By his side hung a crooked scymitar in a black leather scabbard, and from the holsters of his saddle peeped out the but-ends of a pair of pistols; weapons of which I then knew not the use, any more than of the matchlock which was slung at his back. He was mounted on a powerful but jaded horse, and appeared to have already travelled far."

Scenes of active life are painted by the author of the *Kuzzilbash* with the same truth, accuracy, and picturesque effect, which he displays in landscapes or single figures. In war, especially, he is at home; and gives the attack, the retreat, the rally, the bloody and desperate close combat, the flight, pursuit, and massacre, with all the current of a heady fight, as one who must have witnessed such terrors. We regret we have not space to give a farther extract; and still more that we cannot add to these just praises any compliment to the art with which the author has conducted the incidents of his story—which are, to say the least, very slightly put together, and frequently place out of perspective the hero and his affairs. The historical events are dwelt on so often, and at such length, that we lose interest for the *Kuzzilbash*, in tracing the career of Nadir and the revolutions of Persia. This is a sin which, we hope, the author will not cleave to, on further experience. We must also hint, that the moral characters of the agents whom he introduces, are not sufficiently discriminated to maintain much interest with the reader; they too much resemble the *fortem Gyan fortemque Cloanthum*. It may be answered, with plausibility, that people,

trammelled by the dogmatic rules of a false religion, and the general pressure of an arbitrary government, are not apt to run into the individual varieties of character to be found in a free and Christian community. But a more close inspection of that great mass which preserves, at the first view, one dull appearance of universal resemblance, gives a great many differences both of a national, a professional, and an individual kind. While, then, we sincerely hope the author of the *Kuzzilbash* will resume the pen, we would venture to recommend that he commence on a more restricted canvass, and lend considerably more attention to the discrimination of his characters, and the combination of his story. In this case, with his stores of information and powers of language, we cannot help thinking he will secure public favour.

In the mean time, and with our recollection of the remarkable circumstance, that English literature *has* found an interest even in Persia, we feel disposed to nourish hopes that the taste may increase. Why may not European productions become, in time, as indispensable to the moral habits of a Persian, as a Chinese leaf to an European breakfast? Such expectations may appear extravagant to that sect of dampers who may be termed the Cui-bonists.—What would be the good consequence, they may ask, should Britain be able to introduce into Persia the whole trash which loads her own circulating libraries? We reply that these volumes of inanity, as Johnson would have